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ABSTRACT

Designed primarily for English faculty at two-year colleges in California, "Inside English" includes articles on instructional innovations in teaching remedial writing, literature courses, and freshman composition, and on major curricular, administrative, and employment issues in the field. The four issues of volume 11 include the following feature articles: (1) "Rx Holism: Just What the Patient Ordered," by Dennis J. Hook; (2) "Exchange Teacher Tell Us: What's the Difference between Here and There," by Kerry Renshaw; (3) "Writing across the Curriculum: Caring Is Not Enough," by Fred H. Fischer; (4) "Of Failure: What--Or Whom--Do Writing Samples Sample?" by Richard Tracey; (5) "Pedagogy and Productivity," by John C. Lovas; (6) "Critical Thinking: Defining the Critter and Staking Out Its Territory," by Marlys Mayfield; (7) "A Change of Pace and a Change of Attitude: Redwood Writing Project '83," by William K. Hoopes; (8) "Writing across the Curriculum: Raising Student Literacy AND Faculty Morale," by Susan H. McLeod; (9) "Teaching Teachers: Resistance and Writing across the Curriculum," by Judith R. Hert; (10) "It's Not My Job: A Cross-Discipline Solution to Basic Skills Development," by Barbara Davis and Linda Luvaas-Briggs; (11) "Community Colleges and the MLA (Modern Language Association)"; (12) "Workshopping: The Only Way to Go," by John F. Parker; (13) "Block Enrichment Programs: A Solution to the Literacy Problems of Motivated Students," by Connie Missimer; and (14) "Johnny Needs to Write... And Write... And Write," by David Peck. (AYC)

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JC 870 245

EDITOR: BARBARA BILSON

ASSISTANT EDITOR: KEVIN J. RYAN

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ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA ECCTYC TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

inside english

Vol. XI, No. 1 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | October 1983

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ECCTYC Looks At Writing Problems And Solutions

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R_x HOLISM
Just What the Patient Ordered

By DENNIS J. HOOK
Central Washington University

AS I WALKED down the corridor of the English building, I noticed that it was a splendid morning outside, the type of morning when the juices are flowing and no task seems insurmountable — not even the task of teaching Freshman Composition students how to write. And the Masters were warming to that task. For as I passed door after open door, the rich tones floated from a string of classrooms:

> Restrictive clauses are modificatory elements that are necessary to the total meaning of the sentence.

Yet I couldn't help observing that those pearls were being cast before swine. I could

glimpse the rows of stolid, uncomprehending faces staring back at their instructors like so many headstones returning the gaze of a graveyard intruder. Presently, I began to recognize elements of myself in that intruder; it was then that I first started to court the notion that maybe it wouldn't be absolute sacrilege to modify the classical "prescriptive" method of teaching writing.

That was several years ago. What started off as a few cosmetic changes in my teaching method soon gave way to more substantial tinkering. Prescribing began to yield more to facilitating (sorry about the jargon!), as I experimented with the "holistic" approach to teaching. What convinced me to alter my practice was simply that under the new treatment the patient was growing healthier by the hour (the hour being 9-10, MWF).

Ironically, the price to be paid for the cure of the patient is the death of the doctor. I believe that one of the hardest things to do for those of us who have taught composition during the last decade of declining literacy is to abnegate our puristic professional egos, egos which posit that we are the last bastion against what we perceive to be nothing short of the death of language and that the primary way to reverse the trend is to invest all power and authority in the experts and defenders of the language, namely us. That perspective (along with perhaps a sometimes compulsive and hammish need to be the star of the show) is why many of us teach by prescription. We have become prescribers in a unilateral process, setting down rules, laws, and formulas for writing which our students conscientiously record but often do not understand. Holistic teaching would encourage us to make learning more of a bilateral process by turning a more active responsibility for the handling of the patient-student's health over to the patient-student herself. This requires the prescribing physician-teacher to kill a part of himself, an action which seems incongruous to one who considers himself to be a preserver of life-language. Is it a wonder then that holistic education has met with potent resistance in many departments throughout academia?

BUT JUST what is it that holism is killing? In medicine the holistic approach opposes that basically unilateral process in which the prescriber analyzes the health problem and determines its treatment with very little patient input or *understanding*. Within this system, if we suffer from migraine headaches, we seek relief by surrendering ourselves to the incomprehensible expertise of the doctor. The doctor announces, often in Latinate terms, usually the most immediate and physical causes of our symptomatology and then scribbles out an indecipherable prescription for treatment. We next take this coded hieroglyphic over to another expert, the pharmacist, who mixes a mysterious concoction. (It might as well be three parts eye of newt to two parts fillet of fenny snake, for all we know about it.) We take the bottle home, then for the next two weeks religiously ingest the small magic capsules four times daily. Unfortunately, too often the result of all this is that the headaches continue.

The holistic theory of medicine contends that the headaches persist because of a variety of faults in the prescriptive method. In identifying only immediate and only purely physical causes, the prescriptive physician ignores an entire organic network of interrelated causes that combine to produce the ailment. She fails to regard the more remote and the other-than-physical contributors. A holistic physician, *along with the patient*, considers the other parts of the whole also — the patient's diet, psychological and emotional disposition, habits of exercise. The considerations continue until the "whole" picture is formed, at which point the doctor and the patient can begin to co-author a comprehensive treatment program that the patient not only understands but also chiefly administers himself. With the guidance of the holistic doctor, patients discover how a nutritionally balanced diet, an individualized program of exercise, a happier emotional climate at work and at home, a better psychological perception of self, and numerous other parts interdepend upon each other to form a whole that is their health. They also discover that they themselves are the main influence upon how those parts are shaped and how they fit together holistically.

As a writing instructor, have you ever thought of the parallels between teaching composition and practicing medicine? Students' writing is not healthy, so they enroll in a health plan, a composition program. They submit to a particular doctor (me? you?), who obliges them by assuming the traditional role of prescribing physician. The instructor diagnoses the disease in the students' writing by studying the symptoms: comma splices, inappropriate diction, pronoun-antecedent non-agreement, and the rest. Then he prescribes a cure. Often in the same manner of hand as that of a doctor, he scrawls his prescription in the margins of the students' paper:

> Take two ablative absolutes and a glass of compound-complex sentences before retiring at night and call me in the morning!

Students dutifully attempts to follow such directives. Unfortunately, some students have a rough time interpreting the instructions on how to take their medicine properly; others take it correctly, but their writing does not grow more robust. They become proficient technicians in the mechanics of writing but they remain sick writers. Why?

FIRST OF ALL, the students are attempting to respond to another's analysis, one that they often do not understand very well because it derives from an understanding of writing far more sophisticated than theirs and is frequently couched in symbols and phrases that do not connect concretely with their perception of what writing is. Secondly, such a system tends to lead

students to equate a part with the whole. They often conclude that if they punctuate well, spell accurately, and use correct syntax, they will be good writers. This reductive assessment of writing stems from an inability to understand less mechanical, more complex and subtle writing skills that con-

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EDITOR
Barbara Bilson

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Barbara Bilson, Editor
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inside english
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Notices

CALL FOR PAPERS

The SPRING 1984 (Volume 3, Number 3) issue of *The Writing Instructor* will be devoted in part to questions in the evaluation of writing.

For this issue the Editorial Board of *TWI* solicits essays concerning theory, methods, and/or uses of evaluation in the service of the institution, the instructor (classroom teacher, tutor, or consultant), and/or the writer.

Deadline for submission is November 15, 1983. Please see Guidelines for Authors (in the front of every issue).

Address correspondence and manuscripts to:

The Writing Instructor
ATTN: Shirley K. Rose,
Spring 1984 Issue Editor
University of Southern
California
Los Angeles, CA 90089-1291

THE WRITING LAB

THE WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER is intended as an informal means of exchanging information among those who work in writing labs and language skills centers. Brief articles describing labs, their instructional methods and materials, goals, programs, budgets, staffing, services, etc. are invited. For those who wish to join the newsletter group, a donation of $5 to help defray duplicating and mailing costs (with checks made payable to Purdue University, but sent to me) would be appreciated. Please send material for the newsletter and requests to join to:

Professor Muriel Harris, Editor
WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER
Department of English
Purdue University
West Lafayette, Indiana 47907

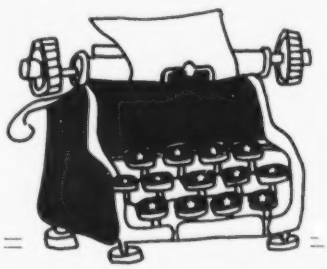
Rx HOLISM:

(Continued from Page 1)

tribute so greatly to the overall effectiveness of a good piece of writing, skills such as establishing a consistent tone in an essay, sharpening the focus of an idea through a variety of rhetorical patterns of development, enhancing coherence and enrichening content through "idea" transitions rather than relying on mechanical markers solely to proceed from point to point, enlivening style through expressive verb choices, and so on.

The holistic approach would allow these ailing students to discover *for themselves* that mechanics and usage are only a part of the whole that we call good writing. It does this by encouraging them to become better evaluators of the relative degree of health of many different writing specimens, including their own, chiefly through comparison. Within the prescriptive mode, the students' impoverished return on a writing assignment is likely to be only those foreign, scribbled diagnostic prescriptions from Dr. X. The doctor gets to do all the lab work, while the patients get only the post-mortem analysis. Why not permit students to become practicing interns by giving them extensive opportunities to examine actual lab specimens? Why not let them see how other students in the class responded to the last assignment? We teachers should share with our students the advantage of scrutinizing twenty to thirty varying specimens of writing. Hence, they could continually refine their sense of what constitutes healthy writing by comparing their own responses to those of others, enabling them to see what works and what doesn't and to discover why in the process. In general, they would become more astute in distinguishing between the levels of quality of the various writings and in applying what they learn to their own work.

IN APPLYING the holistic approach in the classroom through workshops, I first prepare a packet of five short essays, all responding to the same topic question, and an explanation of the "grading" criteria which we will use to diagnose the relative degree of health of each of the five specimens. By choosing arbitrary symbols such as numbers or colors to represent the typical characteristics of each grading level (e.g., "blue": "shows an absolute lack of overall structure," "paragraph sense lacking," "especially weak language use," "numerous severe mechanical errors."), I encourage my students to evaluate according to the specific traits of each essay rather than allow them to summarily categorize it according to the traditional letter grades, which unfortunately have lost most of their denotative meanings for many students and have come to convey pejorative and honorific associations only. This last point is quite significant. I have found that the students who bristle at receiving a "C" on their paper because it connotes mediocrity or even failure to them often feel so stigmatized that they cannot understand or



accept an objective evaluation of their paper; the letter grade actually gets in the way of their learning. To the same students, receiving a "green" on their paper bears no such infamy; to them "green" can mean only "clear overall structure," "adequate paragraph development," "satisfactory language facility," "few mechanical errors," or the like.

I begin the first session of a workshop by briefly introducing my class to the concept of holistically reading and evaluating essays (most are totally unfamiliar with the principle) and by going over the grading characteristics with them. I ask them to base their analysis of each essay in the packet on a series of questions:

> Does the paper address the essay topic in an organized, coherent fashion? Does it show a solid sense of paragraphing? Are the paragraphs well developed, their topics adequately supported? Is the paper relatively free of punctuation faults? Does the essay contain needed transitions? Does it maintain consistent tone? Does it demonstrate an overall effectiveness in diction?

(It is important that such questions continue until a comprehensive view of the relative "wholeness" of the specimen is established. It is equally important that the students struggle to answer these questions as much as possible on their own. The teacher plays the role of health facilitator, guiding them in their questioning but not prescribing the answers to those questions.)

NEXT, I DIVIDE the class into groups of four or five students each and have each group appoint a scribe. I then instruct them to read privately only the first essay in the packet, to apply the holistic criteria to it, to determine the appropriate color or number for it, and finally to report that symbol — without kibitzing — to the scribe. Only after all members of a group have reported their scores do I allow them to discuss the essay among themselves so that each might see how the others perceived the strengths and weaknesses of the piece. After the groups have discussed the essay within their circles for about ten minutes, I draw their focus back to the class as a whole and record the scores from the scribes on the blackboard. Let's say the first paper gets one "orange," six "green's," twelve "red's," and six "yellow's." I then ask them to justify their giving a certain color to the paper, and in the ensuing class discussion I try to "guide" the sometimes widely divergent scores to some degree of reconciliation. I then have them repeat this entire process for the second essay, then the third, and so on. Until the bell rings.

During the next meeting, we complete the workshop. In this segment the students function as both doctors and patients. I randomly distribute their own most recent essays, unmarked, with a blank critique sheet attached to each. Each student must read the particular essay he has received, apply the holistic criteria to it, assign a score at the bottom of the critique sheet, and indicate why he gave it such a score by making a few short, concrete observations after the score. The student then folds up the bottom of the sheet to cover up his assessment, and exchanges papers with another student. He then repeats this process for the second essay, unfolding the critique sheet to see how the other student evaluated the paper only after making his own diagnosis above the fold. Then he double-folds the sheet to obscure both scores and exchanges with a third student. Each student continues diagnosing his classmates' papers, as his own specimen circulates among them. Near the end of the

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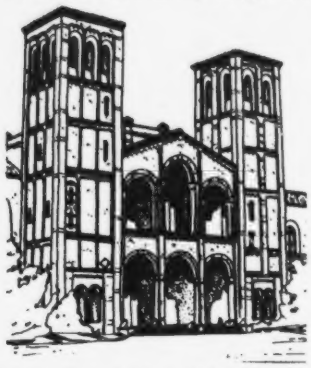
EXCHANGE TEACHER TELLS US

What's the Difference between Here and There

By KERRY RENSHAW
Mt. San Antonio College

If I had a dollar for every time I've been asked to compare teaching in Southern California with teaching in Britain, I'd be able to retire to Laguna Beach and forget about teaching in either place. Nevertheless, the exercise is worthwhile and stimulating, though much



more difficult than I would have thought before coming here. Given that we are cultural cousins, it is amazing how different the education systems are. This is particularly true of the sphere occupied so ubiquitously in California by the community college. In Britain we do not have anything which fills that gap; if you do not gain a place at university by age eighteen or nineteen, your academic education is, in most cases, finished. (This is not true, of course, of vocational education.) Many of the observations I have to make about English teaching here and in Britain reflect the differences in aims and structures of the two education systems.

Two of the most obvious differences at the college level are the age of the students and size of classes. My students in the Further Education college in London range from sixteen to nineteen, and are mostly full-time students. At Mt. San Antonio College the students are nineteen plus (often much older) and, of course, most have part-time or indeed full-time jobs to support themselves. My impression here is that students fly in and out of college, and fit in my freshman comp classes between jazzercise sessions and an eight hour stint at Bob's Big Boy. Class numbers at home are rarely greater than eighteen students at the start of the year; here, thirty is the norm. This dictates a lecture format rather than small-group work. In my (very short) experience, this suits freshman composition quite well, but is less effective for remedial English or for literature—the first requiring personal attention to learning difficulties, the second needing discussion and interchange within the class.

The high initial enrollment produces a high drop-out rate, which is wasteful of college resources and discouraging to the weaker students. Drop-out occurs, of course, in my college at home but at a proportionally lower rate. I feel colleges here might well get a better return on investment from an improved teacher-student ratio.

There are marked contrasts in curricula. The remedial courses here have a strong grammar element, and the freshman composition course concentrates on methodology rather than content. Taking the grammar first, I suspect a British teacher might doubt the value of going over these areas if the students have failed to grasp them at school—and if grammar has not been taught at school, then why not, if it is valuable enough to teach at college level? Essay writing in Britain is learned in part incidentally through the study of other humanities. It is also taught as part of English courses, but with an emphasis on content rather than method. Before coming here, I had never heard of the "definition theme," the "opinion theme," nor even (believe it or not) of "thesis and support." The assumption that mastery of English can progress from vocabulary and sentence building, to paragraph writing, then on to essay writing, and finally to the study of literature may look logical, but in Britain might be challenged as a basis for course structures, on the premise that our language tends to develop in a multi-directional, "organic" way, rather than a sequential, "building-block" way.

I would be very reluctant to suggest that there is a superior, coherent philosophy of English teaching prevailing at this level in Britain. But it is a fair generalization to say that English teaching there to non-academic seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds would be concentrating on functional aspects of communication relating to employment, work reports, understanding directories, income tax demands, letter-writing, and such. The structure of courses here would make more sense if a lot of students climbed the academic ladder all the way up to B.A. level—but how many do?

To add a word about particular courses: my impression is that freshman composition is a very interesting course, from which I, at least, have learned much. It's a good way of improving students' thinking ability, but drawbacks might be that it encourages the production of a type of essay rather than original content. In Britain, topics are looser, and there is emphasis (many would say an over emphasis) on creative writing. Freshman comp always seems to me to have a journalistic tinge to it, and although the teaching of journalism is an obviously important part of the work of English departments here, in Britain it's almost unknown.

I am particularly impressed by literature teaching here. The structure and content of the courses are imaginative and in no way beggar or oversimplify the arts of literary criticism. Anthologies can always be criticized for a "once over lightly" approach, but those I have seen are attractive and well-selected "quarries" of British and American works in which students can be encouraged to dig.

Any accusations of distortion or superficiality the reader might wish to hurl are no doubt justified by a piece such as this. Nevertheless, no such mud should be allowed to stick to the principle of the teaching exchange as a great educator of teachers. My experience so far has been invaluable, both personally

and professionally, due in no small part to a group of exceptionally tolerant students and to the members of the English department at Mt. SAC who have unfailingly guided my faltering hand with kindness and great good humor.

Editor's Note:

Kerry Renshaw is currently on a one-year Fulbright teaching exchange for City and East London College in England. He is teaching in the English department of Mount San Antonio College in Walnut.

American teachers interested in exchanges can obtain further information from:

Teacher Exchange Branch,
International Education Programs,
U.S. Dept. of Education,
Washington, D.C. 20202.

Rx HOLISM:

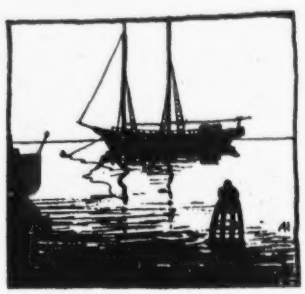
(Continued from Page 2)

period, I have the students seek out their own papers, read them, evaluate them at the top of the critique page, and then unravel that page to see how the others viewed their work. What patient could ask for a more comprehensive examination? After all, she is getting not only a second opinion but also a tenth.

THE RESULTS of the workshop are gratifying. I am not surprised by the wide range of scores on the first sample essay because, after all, the students are reading it "cold." They have no other specimens to compare it with so that they might refine their sense of which ones are healthier bodies of writing and why. The adjustment does not take long. Students soon recognize that they should not have given both the first and the

third essays "yellow's," because these are probably at least two levels apart in their proficiency. Soon, they are diagnosing with the skill of practicing physicians, and are rarely more than one score apart in their assessments of the essays. Moreover, after struggling to articulate the specifics of their analyses at first, they quickly become more proficient at that because they have actually begun to understand the elements of good writing in a much more specific and personal sense than they had before. And as they become more knowledgeable and articulate in their critiques, they grow more skilled in applying their knowledge to the treatment of their own cases. In some cases, it seems as if I can almost see the epiphany in their faces as they suddenly grasp a particular principle clearly for the first time — even though we may have already covered that point repeatedly in regular class sessions.

Realistically, it takes quite a while for a person to gain a comprehensive and thorough knowledge of the various components of her life that combine to determine the whole of her health. It also requires much discipline, vigilance, and practice to apply that learning toward improving her overall health. Moreover, she needs help from those who have made it their jobs to know more than she. But she needs the right kind of assistance, the type that allows her to distinguish between what she needs and can do for herself and what she must rely on others to help her do. While holism is by no means a panacea for all the ills of student writing that we detect these days, I think that if we open our minds to the possibilities in incorporating a measure of the holistic technique in our writing classes and recognize some of the limitations of the more traditional prescriptive method of teaching writing, we may able to combine the merits of both in a new kind of medicine that will benefit the health of both our students and ourselves. Prosit!



SEEING THE BOATS

Sitting here seeing the boats
crisscross the placid lagoon
chilled in approaching evening air
as tinkling sounds cascade aloft
amidst the constant chatter
of fragile souls trying
desperately to connect while
enclosed in waning sunlight,
I know how precious are
these vanishing moments caught in
reflective thought as tenderly comes
the gentle night.

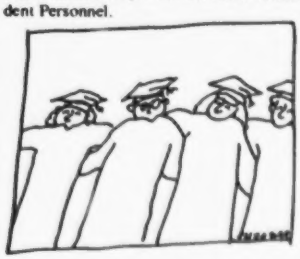
MEL BROWN
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

A PROGRAM THAT WORKS

"Puente Project" Receives Grant

By PATRICIA McGRATH
Chabot College

The BankAmerica Foundation has awarded the Bay Area Writing Project, University of California, Berkeley, a grant for Puente Project, a writing program for Hispanic community college students. Puente Project (*puente* meaning bridge) was developed at Chabot College, Hayward, California, by Patricia McGrath, English Instructor and Bay Area Writing Project Teacher/Consultant, and Felix Galaviz, Assistant Dean of Student Personnel.



Puente departs radically from traditional community college writing programs for limited language students in the following ways:

1. It combines the remedial writing course and the college transfer English 1A course into a two-course sequence, thereby limiting the number of non-transfer "preparatory" courses in English such students typically take—if they have not dropped out.
2. Puente enlists the support of Hispanic professionals from the community in order to effect a change in students' attitudes. Students and mentors are matched according to career interests. The students interview their mentors, spending as many as fifteen hours per quarter together, and the interviews provide the initial content for student papers. In their early contact with the mentors, the students are interested in personal rather than career matters—how the mentors managed to struggle through the educational system, how they dealt with prejudice, and how they juggled family responsibilities and personal careers.

   Puente is based on the assumption that people who are failing need a model of success to identify with and imitate. Much of Puente's strength comes from the strength within the Hispanic community. The students no longer have to adapt themselves to a schizophrenic world view where they fear that they have to become "Anglicized," denying their cultural heritage in order to succeed. With their mentors they are now in contact with Hispanics who have achieved success within the American system without having had to give up their cultural identity. The fact that successful Hispanics volunteer their time simply to talk about their personal and professional lives is overwhelming to students who in the past have been ignored and regarded as failures. Through association, this success immediately instills in students a sense of pride, and as they begin to identify with their mentors, their self-image changes. This change in self-image in turn brings about a change in their attitude toward school.
3. Students become fluent writers quickly in Puente because the interviews with mentors provide engaging and substantive content for writing. Instead of writing about their summer vacations or their favorite hobbies, they are writing about the role of women in the Mexican-American culture, the role of the church in the community, and the value of bilingual education. They share these papers with each other in small response groups; thus, they have a *purpose* for writing and an *audience*, two crucial ingredients for all writers. Group work, Puente has discovered, is particularly effective with Hispanics because their family and community structure lends itself to communal rather than individual effort.
4. Puente sees the students through an *entire sequence* (English 101 and English 1A). They work with the same teacher and the same classmates, with the close support of a Hispanic counselor and mentors as they learn to write college-level papers.

To date, the results of two Chabot programs have been exceptionally strong in terms of student retention, higher grade point averages, increased enrollment in academic programs, and greater numbers of students planning to transfer to four-year institutions.

The Puente model will be tested during the 1983-84 academic year at four northern California community colleges: Ohlone, Evergreen Valley, Sacramento City College, and Chabot. The staffs from the colleges will attend a three-week Summer Institute of the University of California, Berkeley, Bay Area Writing Project where they will be trained by Ms. McGrath and Mr. Galaviz, along with staff from the Bay Area Writing Project, in methods of teaching writing and counseling minority students, networking strategies for mentor recruitment, and recent research on the development of writing ability. After the grant period is completed, the results of the project and guidelines for setting up a similar program for any group of low achieving students will be disseminated nationally.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For a more detailed discussion of the inception, structure, and implementation of the Puente Project, see Patricia McGrath, "A Unique Writing Program: Role Models Help Build a Bridge to Success," *inside english*, June 1982, pp. 1-8.

"Only the One Who Labors Can Say It Better"

By BRUCE BENNETT
Ohlone College

Like legions of other English teachers, I have responded conscientiously to thousands of student papers over the years with comments written in the margins, cryptic symbols between the lines, and a paragraph of evaluation at the end of the essay. Although I have tried to purge my remarks of any harshness, to soften my tone to achieve some platonic ideal of benign criticism, my procedure has remained remarkably the same — comments littered wherever white space permits.

Recently, though, my own experience as a writer in the Bay Area Writing Project's summer "Puente" program has raised questions in my mind about the value of written comments on student papers. This summer I joined a small group of English teachers and Hispanic counselors at the University of California, Berkeley, to prepare for a unique program that we would be undertaking in the fall for Hispanic students [see the accompanying article: "Bank of America Awards Grant for the Puente Project"]. As part of our training we ourselves practiced the kind of writing we would be assigning to our students. We scribbled notes to generate ideas for papers, wrote drafts, then read them aloud in small groups, and exchanged comments before revising the papers. This experience had a profound effect on me. When I read my papers to my group, I was surprised at how vulnerable I felt about my writing. I noticed that the others, too, felt fragile when sharing their writing with our group. We offered each other the ritual apologies before reading our essays and then waited nervously to hear the group's response. Though our comments were always positive and constructive, we all exposed the scars that had been left by our writing experiences when we were students.

One counselor insisted that she "hated to write." Another group member confessed that he felt intimidated by English teachers (as if we English teachers have no problems with our own writing). Later I would see fledgling writers emerge from these groups, proud of the words they had written. But in the beginning when we read our papers aloud, there was a fearful expectancy.

I thought of my own students, struggling writers also, and tried to imagine the impact of my written comments on their self-esteem. I wondered if my comments DID lead to improvement in their writing. Were the comments helpful at all? And if so, what kinds of comments were the most beneficial? My brief experience as a writer in the Puente program could not provide answers to these questions. But it did remind me that a teacher's comments, intended to promote change in writing, could be a double-edged instrument. Ultimately, the responsibility for change lies with the writer, not with the teacher. This idea was well expressed by another instructor in the program who offered this definition of the teacher's role:

> I also learned much through this process [of writing in the Puente program] — only the one who labors can say it better. You see, I've often thought, when I've written a paper (or a simple sentence), whether person X or Y could have said it better. But I've realized that no one else can say it better than yourself. Others can help you "clean it up," but the ideas (your idea) has roots within you . . . The function of teaching is to draw out the very best from a writer so he/she will create a personal masterpiece.
>
> — *Mauro Chavez*

I wonder how far my carefully written comments on my students' papers go in helping them "create a personal masterpiece," in helping them "draw out" their very best.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was originally written for the California Great Teachers Seminar.

Still Basic

By ELAINE M. McLEVIE
Dean of Communication/Fine Arts
Grossmont College

Recently a group of students petitioned the board of trustees of one of California's community colleges to retain the spelling classes that were in danger of being sacrificed in the heavy cutbacks that so many of us have been experiencing. They had succeeded in collecting a very large number of student signatures on their petition and in doing so had highlighted a number of reasons why being able to write correctly is still as important as it ever was. One of the strongest supporters was a business major. For him, the need for correct spelling has been demonstrated when misspelled material entered into a computer was rejected.

Recent concern for visual literacy and computer literacy has sometimes eclipsed the very real need for everyone to be able to communicate, whether with a pen and pencil or an electronic blackboard, in clear correct prose. The task of providing training in this area is still a shared responsibility between English faculty and instructors of other subjects who are role models and markers of essays.

As we face further cutbacks it will be important to remind faculty in disciplines other than English that spelling and writing are needed for us all. Perhaps students in other colleges will not be perceptive enough to lobby, and we will need to do it for them.

News From Our Regions

Send *UPSTATE/DOWNSTATE* news items to

Jack Gill, College of San Mateo — Regions I, II, III

Bert Woodruff, Fresno City College — Regions IV, V, VI

Lois Powers, Fullerton College — Regions VII, VIII

Ann Maioroff, Palomar College — Regions IX, X

REGION III: SAN FRANCISCO SOUTHERN BAY/MONTEREY

Directors: Dick Lundquist, Cabrillo College; John Lovas, DeAnza College.

John Lovas, Dean of Language Arts at DeAnza, has begun publishing a division newsletter, *Free Speech Journal* (the *Free* being an acronym for Foreign Language, Reading, ESL, and English — the departments in the division).

Bob Scott, DeAnza instuctor, delivered a paper at the Modern Language Association Convention in Los Angeles in December 1982. He was part of a panel on Latin American Cinema at which he delivered a paper titled "Miquel Littin and Gabriel Garcia Marquez: The Uses of Language in Determining Power."

REGION VI: CENTRAL COAST

Directors: Jeannette Webber, Santa Barbara City College; Judy Markline, Allan Hancock College.

Several members of the Santa Barbara City College English Department presented papers at the College Composition and Communication Conference in Detroit in March 1983. As part of the panel "Use of Fable, Analogue, and Metaphor in the Teaching of Composition," Elinor Flewellen delivered a paper titled "Escape from the Briar Patch: Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby*," and Jinny Webber read her paper titled "The Broken Self in the Novels of Margaret Atwood." Evanne Jardine addressed the topic "The Composing Process in Business Writing," as part of the panel on "The Child, the Businessman, and the Poet: Composing."

Judy Markline, Allan Hancock College, was elected in June 1983 as the new director of Region VI.

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Jo Ray McCuen, Glendale City College; Lloyd Thomas, Los Angeles Mission College.

Region VII has two new directors: Jo Ray McCuen and Lloyd Thomas. Although no longer a director, Nina Theiss will continue to serve ECCTYC as co-chair, with Bob Mognis (Modesto) of the Placement/Proficiency Tests Committee.

Dean of the Copper Mountain campus is Jim Pulliam, and all correspondence to CMC goes through College of the Desert, 6785 Sage Avenue, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277 (the current high-desert headquarters for COD).

Jim McCormick (San Bernardino Valley College) with Penelope Choy (Los Angeles City College) co-authored the second edition of *Basic Grammar and Usage*, a pre-composition workbook, which was just released from Harcourt Brace Johanovich, Inc. Congratulations to them both.

REGION IX: SAN BERNARDINO

Directors: James Moore, Mt. San Antonio College; Jack Mitchell, San Bernardino Valley College.

The Coachella Valley Community College district broke ground in Joshua Tree in February 1983 for Copper Mountain College.

Copper Mountain College is due, at its opening late in 1983, to be a branch of College of the Desert, which currently offers a number of off-campus classes at various sites throughout the high desert area — Morongo Valley, Yucca Valley, Twentynine Palms, Joshua Tree, Landers, and others.

The groundbreaking was another chapter in a remarkable story. High desert citizens have hoped since 1967, when COD began offering classes in the area, for a campus of their own, but despite $340 thousand in seed money, the dream seemed shattered by Proposition 13. Since then, more than $680 thousand in private donations have poured in, making the construction of Copper Mountain's first three buildings possible.

Current COD offerings in the area are by hourly teachers, and sources say that once the new campus opens that policy will continue. However, high desert population growth has been substantial, and improved school financing could mean the hiring of full-time professional staff.

REGION X: SAN DIEGO

Directors: Ann Maioroff, Palomar College; Shirley Sykes, San Diego Mesa College.

This summer Julie Hatoff, ECCTYC's historian, became the new Vice President of Instruction at Mira Costa College. Julie, along with Don Snepp and Gertrude Fujii, founded ECCTYC in 1973. We appreciate her dedication to ECCTYC and offer warm congratulations.

Ann Maioroff (Palomar College) spent two months at New York University last summer at an NEH seminar under M.L. Rosenthal: Theory Implicit in Poetic Practice, with Special Attention to Modern British and American Poetry. She found the experience invigorating and urges other English instructors from California to apply for NEH summer grants.

FOR MY STUDENTS

Don't give them future,
Don't bring it up,
Nor exhortations to move beyond today
Their lives are too heavy on their heads.
Give them the certainties of Gods and heroes,
The facts of Odysseus' many stops,
The clear patterns of his long delay
And fine talk
And copious tears
And blithe absence of guilt,
Rich joy in perfection,
Ego, cruelty, pride,
Facts all, to warm the heart.
Assign this, and only this,
So that they know, and can recite it all,
And forget their lives, our lives,
The bad examples, murderous authority
Of parents, leaders, teachers,
For which they paid and pay
In missing limbs, disease, raw wounds,
Rejections, denials,
Agony of children, born, aborted,
The future a jagged line of tortured nights,
Unspeakable dreams.

Their days are tenuously shaped by class meetings,
Life encounters, survival,
And fear.
So give them images
And certainties
Of those past heroes
Who could speak and tell their monsters and risks,
Their own, all their own,
Tell and tell, to loving listeners,
And reach home.

NORMA SULLIVAN
San Diego City College

HELP NEEDED

Bored or All Aboard The Reading Railroad To Nirvana

By LEE NICHOLSON
Modesto Junior College

I do not wish here to catalog all the benefits that can accrue in one reader's lifetime from the regular sampling of fine books. But at least two benefits stand out. One is the reader's control of experience. He can control his rate of speed (how fast or slow he reads); also he can choose just what he wishes to review or mark in pencil or question. A second benefit is the ready and instant access for greatness. A reader can be as great as his library, the reader orbiting (when he wants) past the commonplace into a crafty microcosm built of words by a genius.

Yet, my present students have read so little and so irregularly and so indiscriminately that I worry. The high schools in my area no longer offer the Great Masterpieces reading programs, television has become the medium most used for telling censored stories, and most movies substitute always-vanishing pictures for thoughtful language.

My classes are affected, even harmed. In lectures I can no longer refer to the ambition of a Lady Macbeth because she is unknown; in fact, I can think of no literary touchstones of experience—including Holy Scripture—that any class would recognize. Sometimes it seems to me that I must review for each new class several thousand years of cultural experience. Meanwhile my literature classes proceed at a slow and lumbering pace—like greying caravans of burdened elephants—as students learn the story at hand at the same time that they try to recall just how to read.

All this leads to my unresolved problem: *How can I help students begin or continue a long program of thoughtful reading?* Yes, I admit my ambition marks me as presumptuous, yet I cannot be happy until my teaching affects my students both in the class and after it stops. What strategies can I devise? What regimens? What cunning plots?

THE ANSWERS TO GOBBLEDYGOOK IN THE CLASSROOM

Here are the answers to the student "creations" in the March 1983 issue of *i.e.:*

1. A rolling stone gathers no moss.
2. Birds of a feather flock together.
3. Beauty is only skin deep.
4. A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.
5. The cow jumped over the moon.
6. A fool and his money are soon parted.
7. You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink.
8. If you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen.
9. Twinkle, twinkle little star; how I wonder what you are.
10. Give me liberty or give me death.
11. Put your money where your mouth is.
12. Cleanliness is next to godliness.

Hope you had fun figuring these out

SHIRLEY SYKES
San Diego Mesa College

-REviews-

"REviews" features discussions of books and media programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 100 to 500 words and should evaluate the book's or program's effective use in a classroom, in a learning resource center, by an individual student, or by the instructor. Include with the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

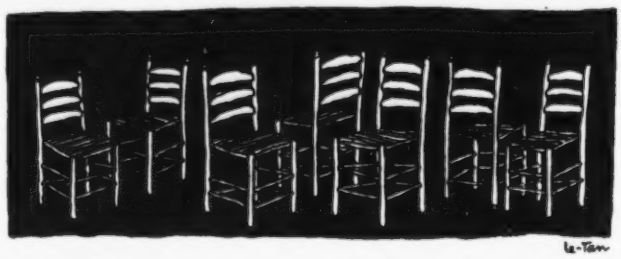
A STRUCTURED PATH TO WRITING

By GERTRUDE FUJII
Los Angeles Valley College

Based on the premise that students do best when they know what is expected of them, *The Structured Essay: A Formula for Writing* outlines a concise step-by-step writing procedure for the beginning college writer.

Two experienced composition instructors, Mary Spangler and Rita Werner, evolved this procedure over years of teaching composition to poorly prepared college freshmen. The fact that these students leave their classes marveling at the simplicity of the formula that enables them to think and write coherently, often for the first time, attests to the success of this teaching technique.

Divided into twelve chapters, *The Structured Essay* concentrates upon the four main forms of discourse: description, narration, exposition, and argumentation. It also contains an additional handbook section that briefly explains the parts of speech, sentence structure, sentence combining, and usage, and includes a list of the most misspelled words.



Starting the first chapter with the stages of invention, the authors suggest free writing, note taking, and journal writing to help the students get comfortable with the physical act of writing, often a psychological block to writing anything at all. Such practical suggestions as the use of tone, diction, order, and proper usage are included in the chapter as well as an introduction to the levels of generality in writing, a list of good beginnings and endings, and directions on using a dictionary.

Progressing from the relatively easy description assignments to the more difficult ones, such as the analysis of professionally written articles and the writing of the term paper, the authors rely entirely on student essays and writings for models. They believe that students can relate better to the writing of their contemporaries than to the writing of professionals, whose diction and phraseology often intimidate the novice writer. Other techniques include repetition and imitation: students are encouraged to rewrite their work for more points and to emulate the student models.

An innovative approach to scoring and grading is the use of a cover sheet for each piece of writing. The cover sheet provides a point system from fifty points for the paragraph, one hundred for the essay, up to three hundred for the term paper. For example, the paragraph cover sheet includes such items as the topic sentence and controlling idea, worth five points; three major subtopics, ten points; sufficient development and supporting detail, twenty points; logical order and transitional expressions, ten points; and a concluding sentence, five points. Students can see by their scores the areas that they need to improve; they may rewrite their work if they score less than the maximum number of points. The point system, with its aura of objectivity, reduces the need for much teacher comment on papers since students can immediately ascertain their specific weaknesses and can focus on their problems. The awarding of points rather than letter grades seems to be less threatening to students; furthermore, they always know exactly their rate of progress, simply by adding up their points.

Another practical writing aid is a page called the "discovery sheet" that provides suggested formats and subject matter outlines with blanks for students to fill in their own ideas and methods of development.

The format of the book is pleasing, using a standard 8½ by 11 inch page and perforating work pages so that they can be removed easily and become part of the student's notebook. The student essays are presented in typed form to differentiate them from the instructions and explanations, which are, of course, printed in standard spaced form with judicious use of white space and boldface topic headings.

The book is the result of four years of class testing, both by the authors and by colleagues within the English Department at Los Angeles Valley College.

☐ Mary Spangler and Rita Werner, *The Structured Essay: A Formula for Writing*, Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall-Hunt Publishing Co., 1982, 288 pp., $16.95.

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The Riverside Reader
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Maxine Hairston, University of Texas at Austin
519 pages • paper • Instructor's Manual • 1981

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Grassroots: The Writer's Workbook
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Patterns: A Short Prose Reader
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Conlin's reader provides models for developmental writers as well as material for improving students' reading skills. Organized by rhetorical mode, the readings vary from paragraph to theme-length selections and include both professional and student works. All selections have been chosen not only for their reading levels but for interest, quality, and liveliness.

Simple, effective apparatus promotes student understanding of the rhetorical modes and of each reading. Writing assignments help students translate reading skills into writing skills.

Writing for a Reason
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The Practicing Writer
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Both of California State University, Fullerton
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Focused on paragraph and short essay writing, Bell and Klammer's skills-oriented text addresses students in an informal, conversational tone. The text includes prewriting strategies, options for paragraph and essay organization, and a section on style for basic writers. The final section on grammar and mechanics includes pretests and posttests to aid independent study.

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James F. Shepherd
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Shepherd teaches strategies for improving both reading-listening vocabulary and writing-speaking vocabulary. Concise, easy-to-understand explanations are reinforced by numerous exercises in varied formats.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

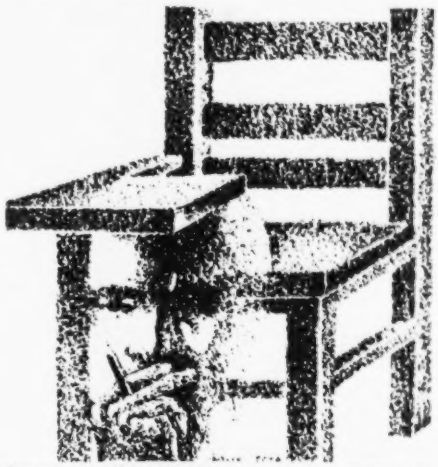
A Very Real *1984*

Welcome back to campus for the 1983-84 academic year. Though recent years have been trying, this current one may well come close to plunging us into an abyss of despair. Not only did the Governor slash millions from the community colleges' budget with the admonition to begin assessing fees to compensate for lost revenues, but the Legislature, at this writing, has yet to pass enabling leglislation that would allow us to initiate such fees. Even if we are allowed to charge the recommended one hundred dollars per year fee, we will not collect enough money to offset the cuts made by the Governor. Community colleges lose at every turn.

Given the fact that we have less money, what will happen to our colleges? Let us take a look at possible consequences in three areas: staffing, programs, and students.

Less money means less to spend on faculty. More obviously this will lead to severe reductions in hiring: vacant positions will be left vacant; hourly personnel will not be hired to staff additional sections; and "consolidation" may well become the buzz word of 1984. In addition to such obvious results there may well be other side effects: no raises, reduction in benefits, metered supplies, shortage of reference and supplementary materials, increased class sizes, increased work loads, and such.

What happens to our programs? As colleges strive for maximum ADA, there will be greater reluctance to offer university parallel elective courses which traditionally enroll fewer students, eventually forcing English departments to become nothing more than service departments for technical ESL programs and vocational programs. And what about rumblings from Sacramento that the only ESL courses we should be offering are "certified college-level courses." And we know what that means!



How are students affected by all this? It is true that students who do ante the one hundred dollars will probably be less apt to drop courses from their programs. But it also means that they will effectively be barred from "trying something new and different." Anyone who knows our clientele knows that the majority need to be encouraged to attempt the unknown, to broaden their horizons, to expose themselves to the civilizing qualities of a truly general education. And what happens to those who will be barred from campus because of a lack of staff and reduced offerings? For the first time we will not be an open door institution, providing for all who apply. Where will those we turn away go? What kinds of jobs will be available to them? What kind of life will they have? As we close the door, whom do we close it on: the second degree student, the occasional student, the non-directed student, the immigrant student, the non-high school graduate, the returning student? The mission of the community college has always centered on service to *all* students, but that will surely have to change.

Am I painting a bleak picture? You bet I am. Unless we are conscious of the horror of the complete scenario, we will be apt to accept each seemingly innocuous change that is suggested without being aware of where we are being led.

Isn't it a supreme irony that all this will be happening in 1984? Perhaps Orwell might be wryly amused by this. I can't be. Can you?

JIM CAGNACCI
President, ECCTYC
City College of San Francisco

The Governor, the CC's, the NEA, and the AFT

$ACRAMENTO $CENE

By GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

By the time you read this report, the Legislature will have completed its current session and will have decided, for the better, for the worse, a number of issues that concern the community colleges (CC's) as well as higher education in general. The hottest question at present is whether the CC's should charge a fee: registration, tuition, call it what you will. The other hot issue, and equally important, is the amount of money in the basic appropriations bill, specifically, the $230 million that Governor Deukmejian cut from the budget that was adopted in July, twenty-one days after the legal deadline (a record, they say).

The summer of 1983 should now be known as the Government's Summer of Great Acrimony. The wrangling over the budget gave everyone involved fits and, probably, a few ulcers; and our leaders in Sacramento have not yet finished their work or their arguing. The fiercest battles were over the schools (K-12, the CC's, the universities): what they would or would not get, what they would or would not have to do. Everyone connected with the schools pleaded agonizingly for more money. The Governor gave some, but not enough to calm the agonies of the pleaders. The latter predict that, as a result of the various proposals and the legislation, there will be major disruptions in what the schools and the CC's in particular do and whom they serve. The Governor, on the other hand, said that things are looking up — the reforms put forth should make the K-12 system work better — and that he would consider some more money again next year. No one, of course, can possibly know how much money would bring forth first class schools and satisfied teachers. Yet a number of reforms are necessary regardless of the amounts of money given or not given. Many of the reforms would cost nothing, others something, others might save a penny or two. It is obvious, in any case, to those who consider the matter for more than thirty seconds that the schools do need more money: How Much? For What? The battle goes on.

The group that will suffer the most, I suspect, will be the CC's. They are caught in a battle over ideology as well as money. I could not possibly say whether the money is causing the ideologies to be questioned or whether the differing ideologies are causing the debate over the money. Deciding whether students should directly pay for any portion of the cost of running their colleges has produced some odd reactions. Neither side has very clearly or very well explained its reasons or its principles; it is just that the State should support the CC's, just that students ought to pay something. Those who favor tuition do not say much about it. The Governor is the most vocal, but he has not explained himself adequately. Those who oppose tuition (fees) have somehow made it a moral issue, though not quite on the level of good versus evil.

(I relate the following incident because it illustrates much of the thinking that too many of the people who argue the case indulge in. This is only one of the more obvious ones.) The student member of the Board of Trustees of the California State Universities and Colleges was heard to pronounce the astonishing proposition that the Board was "forced into the position of responding to the governor by shifting financing of the system to the students. This is a bad precedent." Raising the undergraduates' fees to $687 from $505 hardly shifts the financing of the system to the students, and having students pay some portion of their education was established a long time ago. So much for the educated mind at work in its objective consideration of contemporary phenomena.

One suspects that he is more upset at having to cough up the additional $218 for the coming year rather than at any violation done to his principles. The fee will no doubt be a burden for some students; but, given the fact that charity has been provided for the indigent students, that burden does not justify the violation done to the principles of the educated mind and to clear thinking.

It seems to me that the various ideological issues were settled long ago: the State has been paying for all or part of its citizens' education for who-knows-how-long now, so that principle is certainly established. It is also true and established that students at public institutions have been paying for some portion of the cost of running the place although by no means the full cost. The only question to be debated is which costs should the students pay and how much. The fees at the CC's have been minimal, even miniscule; but the principle is still established. Educators in California have, over the years, tried to maintain a distinction between fees and tuition: fees are to pay for the students' activities and non-instructional items such as medical insurance; and tuition, which they have vowed never to charge, would only pay for instructional costs — teachers' salaries, buildings, and the like. To many people, though, a fee is still a fee whether one chooses to call it that or to call it tuition.

Considering these points, the issue is really a practical one

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(Cont. from Page 7)

even though the politicians have taken the opportunity to turn it into a partisan one rather than to deal with the issue itself: Will the taxpayers agree to pay? Can the State afford to carry the whole system along with its other public welfare programs and charities? How many students cannot afford additional fees? How many will refuse to pay them? And so on. In my more cynical moments, I am inclined to think that those who would not pay (and not go to school) would be those who are not very interested in the first place, those who generally drop out before mid-term anyway. The specific amount, in this discussion, is not particularly important since Mr. Deukmejian's one hundred dollars is an arbitrary figure and once established could very well be decreased or increased. Besides, one hundred dollars for most students is really negligible. It is, roughly speaking, ten dollars per month: the equivalent of two sessions at "The Return of the Jedi," or a couple of joints and one of Pink Floyd's new albums, or a class hour at the video arcade, or a half a tank of gas for their car; the list is endless. It is, as they say, a matter of priorities.

After all the fuss, the charges and countercharges, and the various attacks *ad hominem* have been finished with, we can expect some compromise. It is quite possible that the students will be charged *A* fee, probably less than what the Governor has proposed; that some tax (under the name of closing a loophole, exchanging one tax for another) will be levied; that some portion or all of the base will be restored to the CC's general budget. There are already some signs: the Assembly Speaker, Willy Brown, said the other day that he is willing to discuss what he chose to call a user's tax to benefit CC's. It might be in the form of a sales tax (even sounded vaguely like a direct fee), but it would not be used to pay for courses that are "clearly not educationally related or not employment related." However, Minority Leader, Robert Naylor (Rep., Menlo Park), says that the Republicans will not tolerate additional taxes. Last spring the California Postsecondary Education Commission recommended tuition under certain conditions, and the CC's Board of Governors appears to be weakening its opposition to fees; some students have even admitted that they could manage them. Assembly

members Teresa Hughes (Dem., Los Angeles), chair of the Assembly Education Committee, and John Vasconcellos (Dem., San Jose), chair of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, still appear adamantly opposed to fees at the CC's. The Governor is also still set in his views. Just how the compromise will be worked out or what it will be is the big mystery. Whatever happens, though, the CC's are not going to get enough money to operate as they have in the past.

In early August, the Governor signed SB851, the general operating and financing bill for the CC's. This bill authorizes the system to run and establishes the way that finances are allocated. A separate appropriations bill is necessary to give the colleges their money, and that is what the various parties are now contending.

The summer provided additional entertainment, as well, at least for those whose tastes run to the ridiculous and the bizarre. The report from the President's National Commission on Excellence in Education, which came out in the Spring, contributed its own bit to the festivities. In June, the National Education Association (NEA) held its annual, national convention in Philadelphia; the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) met for its convention in Los Angeles; and throughout the summer numbers of articles by all sorts of experts appeared to explain what is wrong with the schools and who is to be blamed for the whole mess.

After the Commission's report, people began to look all over the place to see if they could not find bits or pieces of excellence lying about. We are now pursuing excellence, rewarding excellence, searching for it everywhere; but, unlike petroleum or gold or lumber, it is not something we can drill for, mine, or grow and harvest. We cannot search for, pursue, or reward excellence (what could it care about any rewards?). We can search for, pursue, and reward the people who do good work, who know what education is about and how to get it done: the sense of the matter that we lost sight of about forty or so years ago. And it is not a simple matter of merit pay.

The NEA, at its convention, indulged in some of its usual assininities although not quite so blatantly as it did last summer. The new president said that teachers "do not want mediocrity in their schools." They would, no doubt, sweep it out with the rest of the garbage. Her way to get rid of it though would be to pay teachers more money. Of course! Why did we not think of that before? She also demanded excellence from the President but did not say how much she wanted. The NEA reaffirmed its opposition to merit pay and castigated Mr. Reagan for having proposed it. In a rare fit of open-mindedness, the NEA did agree to discuss it in efforts to improve education.

The AFT, meeting in Los Angeles, was only slightly less farcical. Its president, Albert Shanker, gave Reagan an F-plus: the F for his performance on education, the plus for having brought the issues of education to the public's attention. His approach is notable as a particularly educated and rational way to discuss and debate their differences. The AFT criticized the NEA for its obstinancy regarding merit pay and said that it would study it. Shanker even went so far as to praise the plan put forth by the Governor of Tennessee. The AFT remained adamantly opposed to tax credits and deductions for people who want to send their kids to private schools.

Mr. Reagan got himself invited to address the AFT's convention. The audience received him well enough but, in a case or two, chose to debate him by waving signs with slogans written on them, a particularly productive way of resolving differences.

Merit pay is receiving far too much attention for its importance. It might work in some places and not in others. (One school district, San Marino Unified in Los Angeles County, used a merit system for about twenty-five years and then recently abandoned the practice because it had ceased to work.) It certainly will not restore the American educational system to its former glory, the system having run quite well without it for a long while; and we should not waste our time on it when there are other things that need our concentration.

Meanwhile, as we are all fully aware, our classes are beginning to meet; and, if my own case is any indication, they will be full (some would say overloaded); the students will tend to stay rather than drift away as they did only a couple of years ago, and our classes will be larger than previously at the end of the term. We will be offering fewer classes and sections since some teachers will have retired and will not have been replaced (the budget again); and there are more students it seems who want to get in. As the old curse has it: May you live in interesting times.

Resolutions That Affect Us All

In September, 1980, *i.e.* published three resolutions on the relationship between composition teaching load and quality of instruction. These resolutions came from the English Council of the University of California, the English Council of the California State University and Colleges, and ECCTYC. Because of their continuing relevance to our teaching experiences and our conversations with administrators and bargaining agents, we reprint these resolutions below.

Moreover, the ECCTYC 1981-1982 Workload Report has been completed. It includes information from ninety-nine California Community Colleges on placement testing, lab-hour differentials, composition weighting factors, class size, teaching hours, and other items. For information, please contact your regional directors.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

We call attention to the following amended statement of the English Council of the University of California, in view of recent decisions to increase composition teaching loads in several California community college districts:

> We are informed by the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges that the normal yearly load for Compostion teachers in their institutions is eight to ten classes with as many as 300 students writing compositions totalling seven to ten thousand words. Noting that the comparable load in our own departments is six to seven classes with 120-130 students writing a comparable number of words, we offer the judgment that the community college load is far too heavy to permit adequate correction of papers and the individual attention to student writing necessary for genuinely effective composition teaching. The disparity of loads between the two levels is in fact so great as to cast doubt upon the actual equivalence of composition classes taught in the community colleges and transferred to the several university campuses for freshman English credit. We urge that composition loads in community college be adjusted so that there will be no future concern about equivalences and transfers.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

The following resolution was adopted unanimously by the English Council of California State University and Colleges, 25 April 1980:

> WHEREAS increases in student demand for English composition courses and programs, at a time of steady state staffing and threat of lay-off, might threaten academic standards by such means as (a) increasing student load for composition teachers beyond reasonable and professional levels, and (b) staffing composition programs with those not fully qualified to teach them; and
>
> WHEREAS composition instruction is unusually demanding of instructional time, since weekly paper-grading and student conferences are normal procedure; and
>
> WHEREAS excessive composition workloads at some community colleges has caused the University of California English Council to question the transfer quality of some composition courses;
>
> BE IT RESOLVED THAT the CSUC English Council establish a standing committee on composition course workloads and staffing to report to the Council at least once a year on the maintenance of proper standards for CSUC English compostion instruction; and
>
> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT we endorse the ECCTYC resolution on composition teaching load.

CALIFORNIA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

The following resolution was adopted unanimously by ECCTYC, 25 April 1980:

> WHEREAS there is continued emphasis on national and statewide levels that critical reading and writing are indeed the basis for all collegiate work; and
>
> WHEREAS there exists increasing concern over the continued decline in students' writing abilities; and
>
> WHEREAS a composition student must write at least once a week and a composition instructor must read, comment on, and correct at least one writing per student per week;
>
> BE IT RESOLVED THAT ECCTYC reaffirms the necessity of adequate differential for each composition course, whether that differential be in the form of reduced unit load, reduced numbers of students, or increased contact hours per course.
>
> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT community college districts take heed of the spring 1979 University of California Council Resolution which clearly defines the relationship between excessive composition teaching loads and the quality of that teaching.

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES — ECCTYC

inside english

Vol. XI, No. 2 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | December 1983

INSIDE *inside english*

ECCTYC Looks At Our Students' Needs

Do we really test our students' skills with our placement exams? Do we read their writing samples with an eye to their failure? Richard Tracey explores these questions in "On Failure." page 4

John Lovas, an administrator and an instructor, considers the seeming dichotomy between pedagogy and productivity. page 9

What is *inside english* looking for from you? page 5

Call for Papers for the March 1984 Issue. page 3

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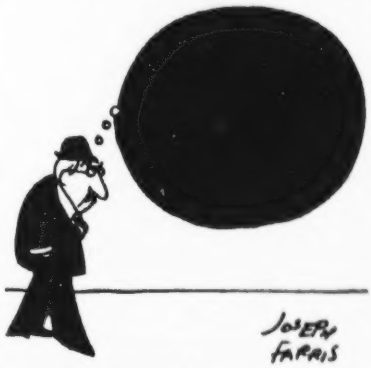
Writing Across the Curriculum — Caring is not Enough

By
FRED H. FISCHER
Imperial Valley College

Imperial Valley College, like many other community college campuses, sees a greater number of non-traditional students every semester. According to our campus demographic reports, we have a 78 per cent Hispanic student body: many students are taking instruction in English for the first time, progressing in our reading and writing continuum each semester after that. Half of our student population is labeled "academically disadvantaged." Approximately one-third of the parents of our students have less than an eighth grade education. After completing the ESL progression of courses, a student will take five semesters of both reading and writing courses to reach the A.A. or A.S. degree. Even with this extended course of study, many students do not demonstrate writing proficiency outside of the classroom. Three hours a week is simply not enough time for the massive language acquisition necessary to succeed in either the four-year university or the business community. On our campus, instructors in other disciplines complain of their students' lack of literacy — their inability to read critically, their wanting vocabulary skills, their deficiencies in both analytical and even reasonable writing. The traditional solution — to hire more faculty — is precluded by the penurious budget policies in Sacramento. However, even if we were able to hire more instructors, students would then have reading and writing courses spread out over four or five years: instructors would find themselves awash in a sea of remedial papers, and taxpayers would become even more critical of what they were led to believe was a college, not an institution solely for remediation.



We at the community college must realize that we have come to our Rubicon, no matter how painful. The decision to use writing skills in every subject area must be addressed. *Does the faculty take on the additional burden, or does it relegate to the socio-economic trash heap those students who came to us as their last and only hope?*

Suggesting a new approach to instruction causes most faculty a dull pain, which builds, rising from the bridge of the nose, culminating in a piercing headache somewhere in the frontal lobe. Compounding this torture is the onus upon English departments. Advocating more writing in each course, English instructors become the walking symbols of more work, less fun. Ironically, when students read or write in a deficient manner, it is the English instructors who shoulder the burden of public resentment. It's now up to us to convince our colleagues that non-traditional as well as traditional students have to understand that the ability to read and write well is not only required in that vacuum called "English class."

Students must be required to demonstrate the skills we have taught them in order to pass their other classes. The non-traditional students, especially, must be assured that the importance of literacy skills is not isolated to that bizarre experience at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays labeled "Writing Fundamentals." They must be assured that the paragraphing skills learned on Tuesday morning will help with the philosophy exam on Wednesday afternoon, the history paper due next month, and the business summary to be turned in on Monday night. The non-traditional students need immediate evidence that a skill learned in one class will have a relation to other classes in their college education. Few students perceive college as isolated bits of information which will one day reveal a beautiful mosaic. On the contrary, most see their courses as always separate and English courses, in particular, as a trial by fire, something that must be endured, just another obstacle to graduation or something that may flunk them out.

The blessing or curse of the community college is that it must serve that particular community of learners, regardless of the distance they must travel to meet our standards. The nature of the non-traditional student increases the length of the journey in arriving at a fully-functional, literate destination. The community college attempts to be all things to all people. Perhaps there were once days when citizens and their elected representatives were willing to supply the financial resources for what they considered worthwhile educational goals. Those days are no more. Universities expect transfer students who have been groomed for adequate performance. The business community expects "college" to still hold the old world connotations of that place where one displays excellence in assumed proficiency in reading and writing skills. The now imperiled open-door policy allows a gale of misconceptions and myths to blow in along with the storm of our daily reality — teaching basic skills.

Some of our students, and indeed some of our teaching colleagues, believe that the issue of substandard writing can be filed away with the last day of class, before the ink is dry on the final exam or, more realistically, before the Scantron sheet is through the machine!

Our students, non-traditional and otherwise, do not want years of remediation. They are with us for the purpose of quickly obtaining the tools they will need to build a better life. Alice G. Brand, a writing program developer, conveys the urgency of our task.

> Writing is integral to professional, not personal, growth. The bottom line is practical skills. Men and women alike want those skills and they want them fast. They want the tips-of-the-trade, rules of thumb for writing they can take back to their desks and apply immediately.[1]

Both non-traditional and traditional students have little reason to believe that what is learned in English class matters, for most other courses require no writing and, therefore, do not validate that learning. By ourselves — with all of our energy, our labs, our tutors — we still limit the utility of the subject for the learner. All the while, our colleagues in other subjects decry the absence of good thinking and good writing. Mike Rose, writer and teacher, refers to the non-reinforced, remedial writing programs

(Continued on Page 3)

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES
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inside english welcomes articles, reviews, and other writing of interest to instructors of English in two-year colleges. Submissions should be limited to no more than eight double-spaced typed pages. Although a detailed policy and style sheet is available on request, in general follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* and *The MLA Style Sheet* (Second Edition). Send manuscripts and requests (with a self-addressed envelope to which stamps are clipped) to Barbara Bilson, Editor, *inside english*, English Department, Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

The editor reserves the right to edit manuscripts so that their format and language conform with the style established in the journal.

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Letters

Dear Editor

"SAC SCENE" CENSURED

The "Sacramento Scene" column by its title appears to be an objective account. There was some factual reporting in Gordon Taylor's column in your October issue. However, both the frequently sarcastic tone and the advocacy of tuition are inappropriate in such a context. Tuition is a complex, controversial issue, and while many of us as faculty and administrators will accept community college tuition of some sort in order to survive as institutions, we remain philosophically opposed to it.

Concerns for inner-city colleges, minorities, and re-entry women should be expressed in your pages: studies show that such institutions and groups are hardest hit when tuition is initiated. (And when my personal property tax bill shows $6.37 to be paid to the local community college district this year, I must seriously question asking students to pay $100 a year.)

In addition, Taylor's specific references (monthly costs averaging out to equal "a couple of joints and one of Pink Floyd's new albums") are trite and overused, qualities we discourage in our students' writing.

I must also take exception to the abuse of editorial privilege in a reportorial column. I refer to the direct attack on both the leadership and rank and file membership of the CTA and NEA. Not being content with pinpointing the "assininities" of the NEA and the "farcical" nature of the AFT's Los Angeles conference, Mr. Taylor then went on to express his personal views on merit pay, an issue of equal complexity to the tuition question. I did, however, notice some "rare fit[s] of open-mindedness" in Mr. Taylor's diatribe.

I hope that in the future Mr. Taylor will be more objective in his reporting. If such issues as tuition are to be discussed in the pages of *inside english*, an open forum format would be more suitable.

TONY GILLERAN
Santa Barbara City College

GORDON TAYLOR RESPONDS

First of all, I wish to thank Mr. Gilleran for his comments on my column. It is interesting to hear the opinions of *i.e.*'s readers and especially of those who disagree: the more the better. A good, rousing debate is always fun. Unfortunately, not enough people feel an urge strong enough to sit down and respond.

As political editor and writer of "Sacramento Scene," I have been left quite free to do what seems best according to the circumstances of the moment. As it has turned out, the column has become a mixture of reporting and commentary. I have reported what I have observed and heard, and, following those accounts, I have felt somewhat free to comment. My friends and colleagues tell me, though, that I am a skeptic and, now and again, given to a bit of irony. I hope, however, that I reserve my public irony for those things that deserve it: the antics of the NEA, for example, and some of the goings on in the State's high offices. I must say, though, that it is not nice to point out that the emperor has no clothes.

It is indeed true that tuition is a complex, controversial issue; but concerns about inner-city colleges, minorities, and re-entry women deserve to be dealt with apart from tuition. If, for example, the systems of financial aid will not compensate those in need for the effects of tuition, then we should look to the systems of financial aid. We should debate tuition on its own merits or demerits, not in relation to other issues that also need attention.

Although my remarks on tuition can be read as advocating it, I only intended to set out the issue in terms we might be able to discuss. As I pointed out in the October column, many people separate tuition from fees; others do not. I am agreeable to either point of view. In any case, it is true that the fundamental principle of fees was established at the CC's a long time ago, and now it is really a practical issue rather than a philosophical one. The issue of one's property tax is a separate one, as well, it seems to me.

In the future, I will very likely do as I have done in the past: report and comment, appropriately, I hope. I also hope that the debate will go on. We do need to debate the issues, and the editor of *i.e.* would like nothing better.

GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

COMPUTERS DO HAVE VALUE

Paul Kaser's article, "Meno's Slave, Gamow's Presses, and GIGIO: Why We Can't Use Computers to Teach English Composition," does not make a convincing case against the usefulness of the computer for teaching composition. He does ridicule some software, but to deny computers because of the purported limitations of several pieces of software does not prove his point.

Kaser writes that no computer can teach "a six year old with a subnormal vocabulary . . . how to express in writing his or her experiences . . . only another human being can do that." No good "human teacher" would expect that of a computer or assign a computer an impossible task. However, because it can't perform miracles doesn't mean it has no value.

On the other hand, we need to recognize that the computer is not a panacea; no technology, no pedagogy, no teacher, no text is. But that is not to say that the computer is not a useful tool in the teaching of composition. Dr. Alfred Bork provides a meaningful perspective. "We shouldn't start by saying, 'What can I do with computers?' rather, we should start by asking, 'What are my pedagogical difficulties? What are the problems associated with teaching writing?'" The computer becomes a useful tool if the latter is the point of departure.

Though I could argue the value of CAI in providing supplementary learning experiences in an interactive mode, I would like instead to make several other points. For those of us who teach writing by process and revision, the word processing capabilities of the computer provide a very remarkable tool for the writer — a tool that permits and encourages fluency, experimentation, revision, and editing. More and more professional writers and student writers are testifying to the effectiveness of this tool.

And that is the key. The computer is a tool — not a total writing course, not a panacea, and not a non-human teacher. Kaser compares what the "human teacher" can do with what the "computer teacher" can not do. The computer is not the teacher. It is a tool for the learner — an interactive tool with great potential for learning. The real problem with Kaser's rejection of the computer is that he insists on looking at teaching and not learning. The "human teacher" does not abdicate his role by using the computer. He facilitates learning by taking advantage of an effective tool — a tool which can provide learning experiences in all the stages of the writing process from prewriting to finished manuscript.

LOIS POWERS
Fullerton College

CORRECTION

The author of the October 1983 issue's front-page article, "Just What the Patient Ordered," should have been identified as Dennis J. Hock, not Dennis J. Hook.

DEAR MR. GOVERNOR

inside english received a copy of the following letter, which was sent to Governor Deukmejian from a member of the English Department at Santa Barbara City College.

Two-year colleges are under attack, an attack that seems based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of this unique institution and of its importance to the community and to the state of California.

The premise beneath many of the changes that community colleges are being threatened with or are already being forced to take is that these schools should duplicate the freshman and sophomore years of four-year institutions — they should be something less than half of a whole college or university, and no more. But for years they have been much more. To diminish their unusual power to meet rapidly changing cultural needs is extraordinarily short-sighted, especially at a time when change is accelerating beyond human capacity to understand it, much less adapt to it.

The typical "transfer" student, that responsible, goal-oriented, reasonably able person who has a clear educational objective is well served by a two-year college, but would be just as well served by a state college or university. It may be appropriate to punish such a student for inefficiency (by imposing a fine for withdrawing from classes, for instance) or to insist on some financial evidence of earnestness, like token tuition. (I am assuming here that the principle of free public education is not endangered, as it is essential to democracy. Presumably the issue is not whether to spend tax monies on education, but is what kind of education to spend it on.)

But many two-year students are not focussed on an objective. They are searching — for a sense of themselves, for ways to understand and deal with their universe, for help with gaps and deficiencies in their learning skills, for a job, a role, an interest, for a way to be useful in the world. Some

(Continued on Page 4)

CARING IS NOT ENOUGH

(Continued from Page 1)

as ghettos. "Our institutions create deplorable conditions for our remedial writing programs and our students — labeled intellectually sub-standard, placed in the conceptual basements of English departments, if placed in the department at all, ghettoized."[1]

The entire faculty of the community college must work together to abolish that ghetto. If, for example, students know they must use writing skills to pass three out of five classes, they will be concerned about correctness and style if only because there are three grades at stake instead of one. The task is greater than both the student and the teacher, but it is not greater than the sum of all the parts in the instructional community. As Robert J. Connors aptly writes,

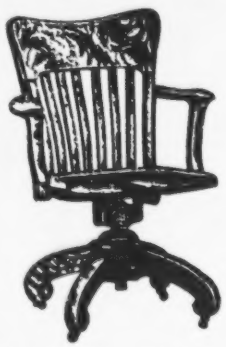
> The universe of discourse is larger than the universe of science, and seductive though the puzzle-solving of normal science may be, it has always been the task of rhetoricians to try to solve problems and puzzles. It is the old burden of humanistic leaning, and everyday we must shoulder it anew.[2]

And here is the rub. The sum of the local English division agrees — yes, we must reinforce writing skills everywhere, but how can we make this everybody's job? Now we come to our colleagues. What lone, instructional zealot can win the support of overburdened colleagues in other disciplines? What single English department can bring about a campus-wide change in the instructional method? What type of consultant and inspirational inservice will capture the hearts of those who are tired of the steady stream of the all-too-common redundant "innovation." Where is the incentive? What are the consequences? Why should a colleague in another discipline jump on this band wagon?

The most penetrating question of all — the one which grabs our guts — concerns picking up the pieces if the experiment fails. How does one recoup the crushed alliances, the upset applecarts, the lost academic independence in the face of what has all the earmarks of certain rejection? What will be left to go back to?

Secretly, we have adorned our co-workers with halos or horns according to their alliance or hostility. But before we hand our reticent colleagues their pitchforks and red union suits, we "English types" had better be honest about our reactions if the shoe were on the other foot. How would we feel if we had to introduce more content from another area, say math or science, because there is a dangerous decline in this area? The mutinous cries would resound across America: "Why should we use our instructional time to pick up where the math and science instructors have failed? We can barely cover the material as it is. And God, no, not those in-services!" Will this be the attitude of our campus once we jump into a writing-across-the-curriculum commitment? Will there be a bounty on the hides of English instructors? Writing means more work — more accountability. More work simply compounds the eroding working conditions on most campuses. Morale plummets.

If there is a solution, it must come from within. We, the concerned English instructors, must plot a strategy we can live with, right now, right here on the pages of *inside english*. We all know how much easier it is to persuade when we have a practical, reasonable solution to what all parties agree is a dilemma. Successful programs must be shared here. We need a win/loss record, not only for Imperial Valley College, but for the entire instructional community throughout the state. The future of our



students, and perhaps our own institutions, depends on how we pull together for a common goal — without monetary compensation, without public praise, without the immediate thanks from our students who will owe their success to our risks, our strategies, our actions reaching out beyond mere caring.

NOTES

[1]Alice G. Brand, "Writing Programs: See How They Grow," *Lifelong Learning*, October, 1982, p. 27.

[2]Mike Rose, "Remedial Writing Courses: A Critique and a Proposal," *College English*, 45(February 1983), 126.

[3]Robert J. Connors, "Composition Studies and Science," *College English*, 45(January 1983), 20.

CALL FOR PAPERS: MAY 1984 ISSUE

As Fred Fischer writes at the end of his article "Writing Across the Curriculum — Caring Is Not Enough," those of us concerned about the literacy and the education of our students "must plot a strategy we can live with, right now, right here on the pages of *inside english*."

If your college has undertaken or is planning to undertake a writing-across-the-curriculum project — whether it is campuswide or narrowly limited, decreed by the administration or developed by a few faculty members — let *i.e.* know about it. The May 1984 issue will be devoted to exploring the various approaches to writing across the curriculum.

inside english is interested in articles that detail how the writing-across-the-curriculum project began at your college, how (very specifically) it was implemented, what objections the faculty raised and how these were dealt with, what benefits have accrued to faculty and students, what difficulties have arisen for faculty and students. Articles may discuss all or any of these issues.

Articles and reviews should reach *i.e.* by 1 March 1984 and should be written to conform to the *inside english* Style Sheet. To receive a Style Sheet write to the editor and enclose a self-addressed, stamped legal-sized envelope.

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WHAT — OR WHOM — DO WRITING SAMPLES SAMPLE?

Of Failure

By RICHARD TRACEY
Cerritos College

We used to begin every writing class at Cerritos, every semester, by asking our students to write a full-page, single-pargraph writing sample. This always seemed rather routine to us, handing out a dittoed list of topics with our own special paper (to insure all students wrote in class), then collecting the "paragraphs" at the end of the hour and, based on our evaluations, transfering students in and out of our five levels of English/ESL. But as of this semester we've abandoned writing samples in favor of the CEPT test. While I was on a one-year leave last year, our director of institutional research proved that number-two pencil marks on a ScanTron form are as reliable a measure of student writing skills as is student writing. And besides, they're cheaper.

When I first heard the news, I couldn't believe it. How in these days of writing across the curriculum could the curriculum committee have done this to writing? But then I remembered that some of the work I had done on leave had shown to me that we might just be better off without writing samples.

It was last fall, during the discussion of "correctness" and "error" in the University of Washington's English 504, Teaching Composition. Anne Ruggles Gere, director of the Puget Sound Writing Program, asked each of the twelve writing teachers in her

seminar to bring in a sample of student writing errors. I brought in this five-year-old Cerritos writing sample:

> Police
>
> The Police in the area I live in are be change to firestone shiffe. Because the city of Lynwood police are so againt the black and chico in the area that people just got sick of the police kill.

The circumstances under which these words were written are somewhat lost to me now. It was September 1977. I had begun our writing-sample routine in the lower-level basic writing class. As the students worked, I read a stack of writing samples from another class, and then a black man, twenty or so, came up to borrow a pencil. I don't remember having one to lend or not, but I do remember telling him I didn't, sending him out to get one somehow, somewhere.

He returned with a pen about fifteen minutes later, spending the last thirty minutes of class writing his paragraph on the topic of "an experience with the police in the area you live in." I took one look at his work and saw only failure for its author. I didn't know what to do. English was his first language, so I couldn't ship him off to ESL. But clearly he was illiterate, even uneducable.

How relieved I was that he never returned for his "results."

A few days later I typed up his paragraph, throwing away the original, filing the typed one in my "Kids say the darnedest things" file of the barbarisms I felt I was up against. I've never known what happened to him, wouldn't recognize him if I saw him. But for almost a year now I've been thinking about him and his paragraph — and me.

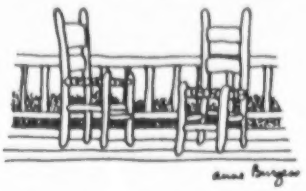
When I looked at his paragraph again last fall, I saw anxiety, not illiteracy; struggle, not uneducability. I don't mean to imply I simply saw what Anne wanted me to see — No, I saw what I should have seen five years before. Yet I do relate my new vision of "Police" to an article Anne assigned our seminar: Mina P. Shaughnessy, "Diving In: An Introduction to Basic Writing," CCC, 27 (October 1976), 234-39; rpt. in *The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook*, ed. Gary Tate and Edward P. J. Corbett (New York and Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981), pp. 62-68.

In this article Shaughnessy describes a "developmental scale"for traditionally prepared English teachers in the open-door college. The first two stages are self-explanatory: "Guarding the Tower" and "Converting the Natives." At the third stage, "Sounding the Depths," the teacher seeks "a deeper understanding of the behavior called writing" (p. 63). At the fourth stage, "Diving In," the teacher seeks an understanding of semantics, linguistics, cognitive psychology, and the other disciplines offering advice to basic writing teachers and their students. Before last year, I believe I was already sounding the depths; my year's leave gave me the time to dive in.

Diving in to that five-year-old paragraph, I was struck first by its topic, the first one, as I recall, on the dittoed list of six or seven handed to the students. The young man's choosing it may have reflected simply his writing on *it* rather than facing the anxiety of having to choose among more topics than he could mentally weigh at once. Or it may even have reflected his resignation that no matter which topic he chose, it wouldn't have helped him succeed. But it may have reflected his wisdom in getting down to business instead of wasting any more of his remaining thirty minutes on the ditto. Whichever, he missed the topic's key word, *experience*, focusing instead on *police*, using that as his title, correctly spelled and centered.

His attention was still on *police* as he indented his paragraph and restated the ditto's "police" topic from that key word on. Again he capitalized *Police*, probably a reflex to the title written two words earlier. His approach to the topic was that some unnamed agent was disbanding the Lynwood Police Department, law enforcement in its former jurisdiction being assumed by the Los Angeles County Sheriff. But with *The Police in the area I live in* already on paper, he could predicate his idea only with a passive construction, *are be change to firestone shiffe*. And no longer in the safe harbor of the dittoed topic, the writer began his drift into, for want of a better term (i.e., "opportunity to learn/teach"), error.

From his own first words on, he wrote his paragraph in black English, two primary features being the uninflected *be* and the



past participle (i.e., *change*). As for the uncapitalized *firestone*, it may or may not have been an error, lower- and upper-case *f*'s being indistinguishable in many peoples' handwriting (remember, I threw away the handwritten original). And consider the complexities of *shiffe*: First of all, the writer left the *r* out of *sheriffe*, converting the word into a single syllable, probably the way he pronounced it. Then he transposed the *e* and *iff*, perhaps a result of some perceptual problem — but notice he didn't misspell the word with just one *f*, as is so common. The writer's not inflecting the word for plural may have owed itself to his sensing a parallel with the other law-enforcement agency mentioned, the singular *Police*. While he capitalized *Police*, he left *shiffe* in lower case, perhaps another orthographic problem.

At *shiffe* the writer paused, resting his pen on the paper to "discover" his thoughts, rereading what he'd written so far or studying the blank lines yet to fill or staring off into space. Whatever his technique, he eventually picked up his pen to continue his paragraph, leaving behind a period. And as the new thought was subordinated to the first one, he began a sentence fragment. This he capitalized, either a response to the period just written or to his belief he was starting a complete thought. "A sentence states a complete thought," he probably recalled, with the time elapsed between writing the two word groups clearly distinguishing two "sentences" in his mind. Or he may have begun a new "sentence" because "A paragraph is a group of sentences," and he knew I'd told the class to write one paragraph.

The subordinator he chose, *because*, came quickly to mind, it being our most common conjunction for expressing causal

(Continued on Page 5)

LETTERS

(Continued from Page 2)

have little confidence, but most come with hope.

Hope is a resource — it creates motivation. For the two-year college to have to reduce its capacity to meet such students' needs is inhumane because it destroys hope; even worse, it deprives the community of the increase in skill and knowledge — and optimism — that would result if the motivation led to learning.

In the two-year college, transfer programs and credit courses take place on the same campus with a multiplicity of other educational pursuits. Students may try different disciplines, levels, and short-term objectives with little risk. The options are open, changing direction is easy. If one path proves too difficult, another may be explored without personal upheaval. A casual interest may develop into an educational major or a career; similarly, a change from an academic to a vocational program can be made without stigma. Remedial courses and tutorial help are available; at the same time, transfer courses offer college level standards and demands. A good two-year college affords an ideal combination of flexibility, support and challenge — all essential for real transforming growth.

If the pressures on two-year colleges are not relieved, the most important of their functions will be lost, a loss that will be sorely felt by all.

The institution must retain its capacity to innovate, keep current, meet the "marketplace" needs of a complex and variable student population, focus on emerging employment opportunities, provide tutorial and remedial assistance, satisfy the hunger of the growing senior population for intellectual and creative stimulation, offer training in responsible citizenship, allow the pursuit of esthetic enrichment, and more. All are necessary to the health of a community — thus the very appropriate designation, community colleges.

Education is expensive when it fails to get results or gets the wrong results. I could offer a very long list of examples of Santa Barbara City College — and other community colleges — getting the right results: the intellectually restless bakery clerk who took five years to earn an A.A. degree, and is now completing a Ph.D. at Harvard; the retired Greyhound bus driver who took every creative writing course offered, some more than once, and eventually became the editor of a national church magazine; the young woman who struggled for "C" grades in transfer courses, switched to business, and now owns a fashionable and lucrative beauty salon; the bright English major who was confused about what she wanted to do, changed her major four times, and now has a doctorate in botany and a job in Washington, D.C.; the middle-aged woman who cried tears of embarrassment and discouragement when she failed a simple punctuation quiz, but went on to earn a master's degree and to work as a research assistant to a professor of history. These students were at Santa Barbara City College for a long time, and took many courses not necessary for their final goals, but without that "inefficiency," the slow, painful — and remarkable — transformations would not have occurred. The elevation of their levels of achievement, of their productivity, and of their spirits was

marked: if any had been my child, I would have considered the money invested very well spent indeed.

Let us hope that the attention now being focussed on community colleges will cause everyone to see this distinctively Californian institution more clearly, to understand it better, to value it profoundly, and to support it with enthusiasm.

Lorraine Belmont
Santa Barbara City College

EDITOR'S NOTE

Just What Is *inside english* Looking For?

At the recent ECCTYC conference in La Jolla, many people gave *inside english* high praise; others voiced their wish for one kind of article or another. When I invited these *i.e.* readers to submit some of their writing to the journal, most said, "Well, just what is *inside english* looking for?" I hope that what follows will answer that question and will encourage more of you to submit manuscripts to *i.e.*

Submissions to *inside english* should be geared to one of the five departments: feature articles, reviews, letters, and regional news.

FEATURE ARTICLES

Feature articles should address a topic in some depth. They might explore a philosophical or pedagogical position, detail a particular program, investigate some larger political issue and its relationship to the English classroom. Looking through the pages of previous issues of *i.e.*, one can find articles about the importance of literature courses in a community college, the question of television as an instructional tool, and the value of oral reading in a composition course. One might consider exploring the implications of the suggested changes in funding remedial courses or consider presenting a rationale for writing-across-the-curriculum programs. Feature articles allow writers to explore a subject in one thousand to eighteen hundred words.

SHORT ARTICLES

These articles, from three hundred to nine hundred words, present the writer's ideas in more limited focus. Here a writer might solve a specific problem — "What I Did When . . .": What I did when the class cried in unison, "We hate poetry"; What I did when the film of *As You Like It* didn't show up on time; What I did when only five people showed up for the department meeting. Short articles provide writers a forum to briefly express their ideas on a favorite topic: why a writing teacher should write; the perils and pleasures of a teacher exchange.

REVIEWS

Although a majority of the reviews appearing in *i.e.* have been of textbooks, the reviews are by no means limited to that category. *inside english* has printed reviews of books that have motivated the readers to reconsider their teaching (Doug Lane's review of Henry Miller's *On Writing*) or that have confronted readers with new ideas about writing or language or learning or teaching (Joe Fitschen's discussion of Gregory Bateson's *Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity*). The reviews may also evaluate media programs (such as Suzanne Sekula's review of the Center for the Humanities slide-tape program "Grammar: Everything You Wanted to Know About Usage") and computer programs that have value for the classroom or the learning lab. Reviews should be from five hundred to twelve hundred words and should include at the end of the text all pertinent publishing information, including cost.

LETTERS

This is your chance to disagree with or support ideas that have been expressed in the *i.e.* articles: this is your chance to express yourself on any topic of your choice — and to do so in a page or two. Letters should be limited to five hundred words (if you want to write more, why not write a short article?) and should include at their conclusion your name and your college. Any point of view may be expressed in the letters.

REGIONAL NEWS

Too often we don't know what our colleagues are doing: what articles or books they have written, what innovations they are attempting in their classes, what papers they are delivering at what conferences, what grants they have received. "Upstate/Downstate" provides a place for these bits of information about all of you. But we have to know about you to print about you. Send your brief items to the Regional Editors.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The editor of *inside english* reserves the right to edit any manuscript to fit the requirements of space and to conform with the NCTE's *Guidelines for Nonsexist Use of Language* and with *i.e.*'s style.

STYLE

Anyone interested may send for the "*inside english* Style Sheet." In general, *inside english* follows *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 13th edition, and *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* in matters of spelling and hyphenation. Manuscripts should avoid sexist language, excessive nominalization, and overuse of the passive.

MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts of any sort should be typed, double-spaced, on bond paper. The title should be at the top center of page one, with the writer's name below the title, and the writer's college below the name. Each subsequent page should be numbered in the upper right corner, the number preceded by the author's last name. A cover letter including the writer's home and work phones and a self-addressed envelope with adequate postage should accompany the manuscript.

I now look forward to receiving articles, letters, reviews, and regional news from many of you who have not submitted manuscripts previously and from those of you who have written for us in the past. Let us work together to make *inside english* a journal that reflects the ideas and concerns of all English teachers in California's community colleges.

Barbara Bilson

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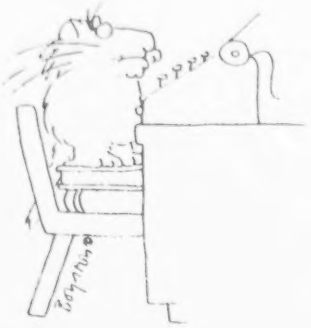
4 ¿FOr Yoxur iNteŗre#sT/&!!!



OF FAILURE

(Continued from Page 4)

relationships in everyday speech. And his use of a subordinator at all shows he was aware, at some level, that his second thought was subordinate to his first. It also shows he was aware, at some level, of the usual paragraph form. He began with a topic sentence and then restricted it. Thus he followed the topic-restriction-illustration (TRI) pattern or the topic-restatement-illustration-analysis-closure (TRIAC) pattern, analyzed by Alton Becker and William Irmscher, respectively. Or, in Francis Christensen's terms, the writer correctly descended from his "top sentence" to a lower level of generality.

But this more specific sentence continued the writer's drift into error. His misspellings of *Because* and *against* may have been just that, misspellings. But they were probably attempts to spell correctly his pronunciations of the two words, omitting the difficult /z/ and /s/ phonemes. Likewise, *black* and *chico* were written without their /s/ phonemes, absent inflections much more likely black English than misspellings. What's more, *black* and *chico*, in this writer's context, were similar to *police*, singular in aspect but construed as plural — notice its correctly inflected verb, *are* — as was *people*, five words later. In fact, every plural noun the writer used in his paragraph is singular in aspect.

Substituting *chico* for *Chicano*, however, may have been due to something as minor as an unconscious recollection of the city of Chico, with the lower-case *c* perhaps orthography again; or it may have been due to something as major as the political choice of black slang over Hispanic preference, with insult added to injury by a refusal to capitalize the *c*. Capitalization also figures in the irony of the writer's incorrectly capitalizing *Police* in its first instance but incorrectly not capitalizing it in its second, where *city* should have been capitalized as well — but these are fairly arcane spelling rules.

The writer's failure to inflect *kill*, at the end of the paragraph, was another feature dictated by his black dialect. But what standard construction did the writer intend? Just *killing* (participle, modifying *police*)? Or *killings* (gerund, with *police* modifying it)? Or *the police killing blacks and Chicanos* (gerund phrase)? Or *killers* (noun, modified by *police*)? Whichever was his intent, I must admit *kill* is the most emphatic choice, all the others producing what in poetry we'd call a weak ending.

Looking at the paragraph as a whole last year, I saw not failure, but success. The writer wrote one of two sentences correctly, subordinated two of three clauses correctly, inflected four of seven verbs correctly, and probably spelled thirty-six of thirty-nine words correctly. He clearly demonstrated competence in his native tongue. It was just his performance of it that gave him — and me — problems. Yet it was a typical piece of basic writing: avoided at first, then laboriously produced; anxiety-ridden; more a transcript of speech than a piece of writing. It was clearly a "draft," writer-based, reflecting the writer's thinking process, not yet revised for any reader to read — notice the four *police*'s and the two *in the area*'s in just forty words. But the writer wasn't communicating anything about the Lynwood Police to me in 1977. He was communicating something I couldn't, wouldn't understand until 1982; he was really communicating his failure to come to a writing class prepared to write, his failure to fill the page, his failure ever to return for his "results."

Now, I'm not suggesting any teacher spend as much time studying any writing sample as I have spent on this short paragraph. Rather, the reason I've spent so much time on it, the reason I first took it into Anne Gere's seminar, is to criticize my failure in responding to its author in 1977. The reason is to criticize my college's failure in asking our mainly minority population of basic writers to write about "an experience with the [mainly white population of the] police," to be evaluated by our mainly white population of English teachers. The reason is to criticize our profession's failure in assuming we can identify our students' competencies by evaluating *under pressure*

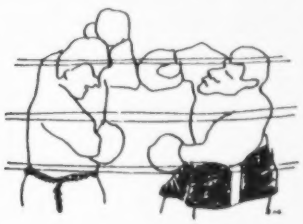
their performances *under pressure* on single-draft (when do we ever write in a single draft?) "paragraphs" (what, exactly, is a paragraph?).

If I could speak with the author of "Police" today, I still might not be able to "solve" the English "problems" that motivated him to enroll in my class, to come back that first day after hunting down a pen somewhere, somehow. But at least I don't think I'd add any more to his problems, which is all I did that day I failed him six years ago.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Politics, Not Principles

As I attempt to meet the deadline for submitting material for the December issue of *i.e.*, there has been no significant news from Sacramento, no movement toward settling the fiscal crisis of California's community colleges. With both Governor Deukmejian and Speaker Brown using



community college financing as a political battlefield, refusing even to consider the most rational and face-saving compromises being offered, no apparent relief for the system is in sight. Each day of their intransigence diminishes any hope of a possible settlement before the beginning of the spring term. Most districts are riding the thin edge of bankruptcy, and it is most likely that at least four districts will file bankruptcy proceedings during the first few weeks of 1984. Despite all the rhetoric about educational reform, fiscal accountability, the need for students to share the cost of education, the need to centralize governance, and the rest, the real issue seems to be the stubbornness and mutual personal dislike of two powerful political figures. It is far from comforting to know that the whimsy of personal and political rivalry is about to cause the dismantling of an educational system.

The colleges that can survive the imminent fiscal crunch can do so only by making serious, if not disastrous, cuts in their educational programs. Who will bear the brunt of these cuts? Most likely, they will be those instructional areas that do not receive federal funding or corporate subsidy, that do not have powerful community/corporate advisory committees. Specifically, English departments and other arcane academic departments will find themselves becoming nothing more than "service departments" for vocational and technical programs. They will offer only survival skills; they will train, not educate. All talk of "academic rigor" and "academic floor" will come to nothing. What need will there be for "rigor" when there will be no academics? What need for a "floor" when the bottom will have dropped out?

Unless some fiscal stability is afforded the community colleges, then the few victories accorded them during the past legislative session are indeed hollow shams. What value will there be in having an instructor appointed to the State Board of Governors (SB 1204) when that Board will be doing little more than conducting funeral rites for an entire system? What value will there be in having a four-year funding plan (SB 851) when no one has a clue to the funding base?

Trying to cure all the ills of a system by pouring into it more and more money is not a legitimate or rational solution to the problem, but neither is it fair or sane to pretend that an answer can be provided by cutting off all funding. The most frustrating and demoralizing aspect of this fiscal crisis is the lack of principle and the surfeit of politics exhibited by those in Sacramento who presently control the purse strings. The University of California has its funding, as has the California State University and Colleges. If the community college system ever

saw itself as more than a second-class citizen, more than the proverbial stereotype of the stepchild, recent activity by our elected representatives in Sacramento and lack of activity on the part of the citizenry should erase any delusions and irrevocably establish that community colleges are beyond the contempt of politicians and beyond the concern of the general public. There is more political and public outcry over obtaining satisfactory living quarters for the Governor than there is over providing free and accessible education to the citizens of this State.

JIM CAGNACCI
President of ECCTYC
City College of San Francisco

I HATE PIGEONS

Outside the depot the pigeons
pick at the exhausted weeds —
big spreads of lacy weeds
that fight the fractured asphalt,
emerge, and subside. The air
is full of soot and the growls
of Greyhounds, full of pigeon
coos, and the weeds, now,
register the lumbering, steel
and rubber imprint of U.S. Royal
retreads. Between buses the pigeons
strut like circus dwarfs.
Cute. They prance and pirouette.
They come in grey, brown,
and white — the necks of the greys
glitter green as disease.
I toss crumbs of my Hostess
Twinkie into the tarry weeds,
and the birds fight like teenaged
girls, high chests atremble.
Were I someone else
I would grin, amused. I'm not,
not amused, not someone else.
As I said, I hate pigeons.

RICHARD LINDER
Orange Coast College

Pawns in Sacramento's Money Game

By GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

It doesn't seem to make any difference what anyone reports regarding the affairs of the State: Wait a day or two and things will go topsy-turvy, or what appears to be happening will not have happened after all. The recent legislative session ended officially on 15 September. The legislators were still working for several days after that mainly to resolve some issues regarding the State's prisons and to give some money ($108.5 million) to the community colleges (CC's) and to charge students fifty dollars per semester to attend them. The two major contending factions in Sacramento, Governor George Deukmejian and Assembly Speaker Willy Brown and their respective minions, appeared, during these last hectic days, to be reconciling their differences, and then the whole thing fell apart. Each fell back onto his principles, refused to budge, and accused the other of being intransigent, of wanting to destroy the system. By Monday morning (19 September), the Legislature had closed up shop, and its members had scattered themselves to many parts of the world.

For the CC's, the situation looks pretty grim, indeed. On 18 September, during the very late hours, the Senate amended AB#207 (Konnyu, R., Cupertino) to set up the main elements of a compromise: it would return the $108.5 million to re-establish the funding base at last year's level, mandate the $50 fee per semester for full-time students (six units or more) and $5 per unit for part-time students, make the state-mandated drop fee optional and based on the school's costs, require the CC's Board of Governors along with the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) to study the impact of the different fees on various groups of students, to report back by 15 May 1984, and to submit the final report by 1 March 1985. The bill would also maintain a district's level of income if its enrollment were to drop in 1984-85. The general compromise also included a moratorium (not put into AB 207) on raising the tuition fee for the remainder of Mr. Deukmejian's term and a sunset clause setting a date, two or three years hence, at which time the section allowing fees would automatically expire. (See the Faculty Association of California CC's *FACCC7S* for October 1983 for a fairly even-handed review of the events at the Legislature over the past few months.)

During the two weeks after the Legislature adjourned, the

contending groups began again to make conciliatory comments and gestures, and the compromise looked as if it might succeed after all. Then Assemblyman Robert Naylor (R., San Carlos) said: Sorry, no sunset clause, raise fees to two hundred dollars, revise the laws relating to teachers' employment, et cetera; and other people got into the act, and, once again, the whole deal was off. That is how things stand at the moment: as far as the CC's are concerned, the legislative ship is dead in the water; Sacramento appears to be in the doldrums. There is still some vague talk about getting the legislators back to settle the issues surrounding the CC's; the general feeling, however, is that nothing will happen before the next session begins in January 1984. Willy Brown has said he does not want to call the people back to continue the work, and George Deukmejian is reluctant to call a special session. If we can get all the parties off dead center by 20 October, then the CC's can still get their full allotments beginning 20 January 1984, the normal date when the monthly payments are due from the State.

$ACRAMENTO $CENE-

There are a few other voices of dissention around as well, some of them sounds in the wilderness, others requiring attention. One commentator reports that after trimming their non-essentials (what that means is debatable, of course), some districts will find their enrollments dropping by negligible amounts. Those who have managed themselves prudently will survive, the stronger for the effort; those who have not might very well face a disaster of sorts. His conclusion would be, no doubt, that we need neither the $108.5 million nor the $50 tuition fee. Senator Ken Maddy (R., Fresno), on the other hand, says that both the CC's and California's universities have been whining and crying "Wolf!" for so long that no one can know how serious their difficulties are or if they are in any trouble at all. If they are in financial trouble, is it because the Governor and the Legislature won't give them enough money or is it that they have been prodigal and profligate? Senator Wadie P. Deddah (D., Chula Vista) basically agrees with Senator Maddy but thinks that, perhaps, this year the upper schools are serious about their complaints; that, perhaps, indeed, this time the wolf approacheth.

Assembly Speaker Brown has appointed a special committee to study the financing of the CC's and has called its first meeting to look at the Los Angeles CC District's finances. The committee has ten members, almost all from Southern California: six Democrats and four Republicans, in addition to Mr. Brown, a Democrat, the chairman.

A major achievement, mainly because no one thought it

(Continued on Page 8)

SACRAMENTO SCENE

(Continued from Page 7)

could be done, was getting SB 1204 (Carpenter, D., Cypress) through the Legislature and getting it signed by the Governor. It was passed almost entirely because of the efforts of Patrick McCallum, FACCC's executive director and legislative advocate in Sacramento. He made the members of the relative committees aware of the bill and was assured that a sufficient number would vote for it to get it out of the committees. A number of people were against it: the Chancellor of the CC's, the CC's Board of Governors (BG), the trustees association, for example. The bill places a tenured CC teacher on the CC's BG as one of the fifteen permanent members. There are a few, insignificant restrictions on what issues the person can vote on, but they are things that are not

likely to come before the Board anyway: teachers' salaries, issues in collective bargaining, and the like. How important that seat will ultimately be, how much that teacher can influence a full board, remains to be seen; but this bill makes us equal to the students and to the K-12 and university teachers in giving us some voice in our own affairs. The Academic Senate of the California CC's will submit the names of at least three people from which the Governor will make the appointment for a two-year term.

Seemingly unrelated to events in Sacramento (though, perhaps, more related than we might think), a number of different people and groups keep coming up with analyses of the problems in the nation's schools and offering the appropriate solutions. None, of course, agrees with the others. Yet another idea (not new) surfaced the other day, put forth this time by a congressional, bipartisan panel or task force (those military metaphors are certainly impressive) of twenty-one people. This one was set up by Representative Carl Perkins (D., Kentucky), chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, partly in response to President Reagan's White House Commission; Representative Paul Simon (D., Illinois) is its chairman. The task force announced the other day that rather than concentrate only on merit pay the pay for all teachers should be raised. It also recommended establishing a $50 million federal scholarship program to encourage gifted high school students to become teachers. The president of the National Education Association (NEA), Mary Futrell, in keeping with the NEA's centrist, authoritarian views, criticized the report because it did not recommend concentrating more power in the federal government allowing it to dictate solutions to educational problems.

Earlier on, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching published a report, *High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983, $15). The principal author, Ernest Boyer, the Foundation's president, takes a much more optimistic view than President Reagan's White House Commission and its "rising tide of mediocrity." Whether or not the tide is rising, Mr. Boyer's report says that every student should be taught to think and communicate in English. Literacy (and that refers only to letters, to the language) is "the essential tool." The report, which gives great emphasis to the teaching of English, says that the majority of all students' time should be devoted to studying it. Since language is the key to everything else, let us hope so.

L.A./A.M.

I live in a city of hills and dreams,
Mornings of sparkling puddles on bus stop benches,
Dark tufts of palms towering over concrete and glass
Brushing the fresh-painted cornflower sky—
And the hills beyond hills appear born overnight—
When have I ever seen them before?

If the sun stopped for Joshua, stop it now,
Let the afternoon never come,
Returning to us sheets of advancing brown dusk
That taint the blue and banish the hills
And the palms into dreamless slumber—

SCOTT GIANTVALLEY
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Both of California State University, Long Beach
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The Riverside Reader, Volume II
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-REviews-

"REviews" features discussions of books, articles, and media and computer programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 500 to 1200 words and should evaluate the book's, article's, or program's effectiveness in or application to the classroom or learning center or its pedagogical or motivational value to the individual student or teacher. Include at the end of the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

A POET WORTH RE-READING

By ANN MAIOROFF
Palomar College

With the recent publication of Elizabeth Bishop's *The Complete Poems 1927-1979*, it is time to take a new look at Bishop's work. Before she died, 6 October 1979, she had won numerous awards, including the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the Academy of American Poets Award, and the Neustadt International Prize for Literature. Poets as different from one another as Howard Moss, Robert Lowell, and John Ashbery showered her with

praise. As this volume shows, although Bishop's body of work is quite small — 115 poems and 26 translations — and although she is not a pioneer — a Yeats, Pound, or Eliot, breaking new ground for future generations of poets — her poems reward anew with each reading. Exactness, integrity, clarity with complexity, lyrical skill, and freshness characterize her work. Instructors will want to spend time with these poems and to introduce them to students, especially to creative writing students who need to study someone who avoids both self-indulgent incoherence and exquisite emptiness.

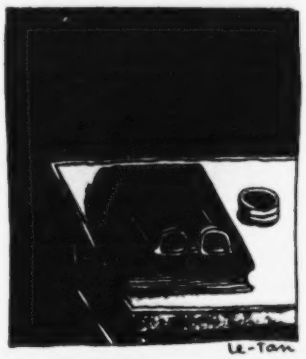
Without sentimentalism or didacticism, in her deceptively simple, plain-speaking New Englander voice, Bishop gives her readers a new view of the ordinary as she writes about the awful and awe-inspiring. "The Bight," written on a birthday at a time when she was probably contemplating the twists of her existence, summarizes her philosophy of life and her poetics:

> The bight is littered with old
> correspondences.
> Click. Click. Goes the dredge,
> and brings up a dripping jawful of
> marl.
> All the untidy activity continues,
> awful but cheerful.

Bishop begins with the mundane, often overlooked, material of existence like the "the dripping jawful of marl" to develop "correspondences" or conceits much as Donne and Herbert, whom she avowedly admired. The influence of her mentor, Marianne Moore, is also evident in these poems that lead from close observation to illumination. For example, in the often anthologized poem "The Fish," Bishop leads the reader through a close examination of the finally captured, ancient fish, trailing his five old pieces of fish-line while the concrete description evokes pride, sadness, pity, respect, empathy, admiration and, at last, celebration and transcendence. Bishop's eye and exact phrasing are justifiably famous:

> He hung a grunting weight,
> battered and venerable
> and homely. Here and there
> his brown skin hung in strips
> like ancient wallpaper,
> and its pattern of darker brown
> was like wallpaper:
> shapes like full-blown roses
> stained and lost through age.
> He was speckled with barnacles,
> fine rosettes of lime,
> and infested
> with tiny white sea-lice,
> and underneath two or three
> rags of green weed hung down.

"In the Waiting Room" also exemplifies the movement from concrete detail to complex ideas, from a description of everyday experience to enlightenment. The poem shows a child's fear of sexuality, suffering, and death as she grasps, in a momentary intuition, what it is to be human. The concrete description creates several overlapping affective units to give a sense of the complex mixture of emotions that surround such a discovery of identity and knowledge: waiting in ignorance and isolation; dimly perceived awareness of suffering, sexuality, and death; avoidance; fuller apprehension; surprise; dizziness, horror, and wonderment; partial suppression and acceptance. As she is waiting for her aunt in a dentist's office, the "I" of the poem, a grown-up recalling when she was a child of not quite seven years, reveals her feelings of isolation



from her aunt, the grown-up world, and the contents of the *National Geographic* she is reading. Skillfully, Bishop implies maturity, suffering, and death with the description of photographs in the *National Geographic* of "a dead man slung on a pole" and of native women with hanging breasts. When Elizabeth hears her aunt cry out in pain, she realizes that suffering is as close as the next room, that she is not so distant from the beings in the magazine:

> What took me
> completely by surprise
> was that it was *me*:
> my voice, in my mouth.
> I was my foolish aunt,
> I — we — were falling, falling,
> our eyes glued to the cover
> of the *National Geographic*,
> February, 1918

While Bishop uses concrete detail and exact observation to convey meaning, she also considers dreams and fantasy important. Because of her intense interest in paradox and the illusive nature of truth, she explores life through fables such as "The Man-Moth," "Miracle for Breakfast," "The Week," "The Monument," "The River-man," "Crusoe in England," and many more. Her fables are like Chagall paintings where incongruities heighten elements of the real. Mirrors, fog, mist, and dreams are often essential to her poems. We can see this surrealistic approach at work in the last two stanzas of "Love Lies Sleeping":

> for always to one, or several, morning
> comes,
> whose head has fallen over the edge of
> his bed,
> whose face is turned
> so that the image of
>
> the city grows down into his open eyes
> inverted and distorted. No. I mean
> distorted and revealed,
> if he sees it at all.

In many poems the reader can feel the tension which Bishop stresses between the real and the imaginary. For example, in "The Imaginary Iceberg" she puts us into a dream world, even as she explores whether reality or the imagination is more valuable. The central sensibility begins the poem with the announcement, "We'd rather have the iceberg than the ship." By analogy the poet chooses the imagination over real life, although by the end of the poem we are forced to come back to the world of human error and weakness, where compromises must be made, "where waves give in to one another's waves." Throughout the poem, the positive nature of the iceberg/imagination is balanced with its negative qualities. The iceberg/imagination, which can be the source of so much beauty, inspiration, and power, is cold, cruel, and violent. As the poem demonstrates, the poet must be resigned to the fact that it is impossible to "own," to completely control or direct the imagination, which improvises without regard for human wishes. But the necessity of the imagination for humans is clear:

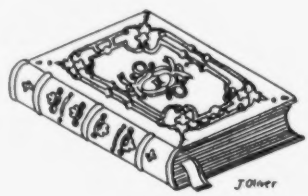
> Icebergs behoove the soul
> (both being self-made from elements
> least visible)
> to see them so: fleshed, fair, erected
> indivisible.

As Bishop employs the material of real life and of dreams, she demands that we find joy in what we have, despite the overwhelming problems of being human. She describes her house in "Song For the Rainy Season":

> rejoice! For a later
> era will differ.
> (O difference that kills,
> or intimidates, much
> of all our small shadowy life!) Without
> water
> the great rock will stare
> unmagnetized, bare,
> no longer wearing
> rainbows or rain,
> the forgiving air
> and the high fog gone;
> the owls will move on
> and the several
> waterfalls shrivel
> in the steady sun.

Bishop's facility with traditional forms like the sestina, villanelle, and sonnet, her mastery of free verse, and her vivid honesty have left us a tough-minded poetry which always offers strength and solace. The commonplace has become extraordinary and the mystical concrete. We and our students can identify with the human predicaments in *The Complete Poems* and can admire the skill with which she presents her visions.

☐ Elizabeth Bishop, *The Complete Poems 1927-1979*, New York: Farrar-Straus-Giroux, 1983, 287 pp., $17.50.



Pedagogy and "Productivity"

By JOHN C. LOVAS
De Anza College

The first word of my title is an old-fashioned one, redolent of bygone expressions like "schoolmaster," "academia," "disciplines," and "teaching as a vocation." No doubt it looks strange conjoined with this year's nonce word, evocative of these current items in our verbal repertoire: "cost efficient," "low ratios," "quantitative," "high producers," "hard data," and "soft ADA." Now there's nothing wrong with that sort of lingo: financial officers must deal in it daily and it's just as useful as the lingo of the philosopher or the chemist. If you are a widget maker, your work conversation might well be full of such expressions—after all, they developed as a consequence of Frederick Taylor's Scientific Management theory (first employed by Bethlehem Steel, ca. 1906) and Henry Ford's later successful application of Taylor's "time and mo-

(Continued on Page 10)

News From Our Regions

"Upstate/Downstate" features brief items of interest about individual teachers or individual colleges. Please send "Upstate/Downstate" news items to:
Jack Gill, College of San Mateo: Regions I, II, III.
Bert Woodruff, Fresno City College: Regions IV, V, VI.
Lois Powers, Fullerton College: Regions VII, VIII.
Ann Maioroff, Palomar College: Regions IX, X.

REGION V: SOUTH VALLEY

Director: Bert Woodruff, Fresno City College.

Paul Kaser, chairperson of the English Department at Kings River Community College and a published novelist and short story writer, and Bonnie Trask of Fresno City College's History Department are team teaching "Literature of the American West" at Fresno City College this fall. The idea for the course came out of a regional ECCTYC conference last spring in Sacramento. W. Turrentine Jackson from University of California, Davis, spoke at the conference about his use of classics of American literature in his courses on the history of the American West. Among the works Kaser and Trask are using are Guthrie's *The Big Sky*, Parkman's *The Oregon Trail*, Cather's *My Antonia*, Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*, Clark's *The Ox-Bow Incident*, and Wister's *The Virginian*. Of all the literature classes offered at FCC, this one filled the best — perhaps because of its dual emphasis on literature and history.

Readers of the *Cimarron Review* (published at Oklahoma State University) will note that the lead story in the July 1983 issue is "Tomas" by Bert Woodruff, Fresno City College.

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Jo Ray McCuen, Glendale City College; Lloyd Thomas, Los Angeles Mission College.

Congratulations to James Krusoe, creative writing instructor at Santa Monica College, on the publication of his book of poems, *Jungle Girl*, published by Little Caesar Press. This is Jim's fifth book.

REGION VIII: SOUTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Lois Powers, Fullerton College; Sunny Laub, Santa Ana College.

Long Beach City College has been working of a FIPSE (Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education) grant to examine its English Placement Test — its reliability, validity, and relationship to course content. As part of that study, six participating colleges and universities (Cerritos College, Cypress College, Fullerton College, Long Beach City College, CSU-Fullerton, and CSU-Long Beach) are conducting a series of three workshops to discuss student assessment and course content for freshman composition and remedial English.

The objective of these workshops — the first to be held 17 November 1983 at Long Beach City College on "The Integrity of Assessment" — is to explore the possibility of reaching consensus (1) on how students are assessed (through English placement and proficiency testing and testing within freshman composition and remedial English classes) and (2) on course content and standards for other classes.

Orange Coast College has been awarded an NEH grant (Bob Dees, project director) for an interdisciplinary project called "The Crossover Program." This program, beginning in spring, consists of eight separately paired courses which seek to combine the learning of freshman composition writing and thinking skills with the content and skills of other college subjects such as anthropology, early childhood, geology, and history. As one of their goals they seek to increase faculty and student appreciation of writing as a means of developing and exercising critical thought and better learning.

Jewell Keusder, on sabbatical leave from Cypress College last spring, explored programs in English as a Second Language in the United States, Europe, and Asia. She surveyed exemplary ESL programs in California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Hawaii, as well as colleges and schools in Japan, England, Portugal, Greece, and China. The major areas of her investigation were (1) program design, (2) placement and testing, (3) use of technology, and (4) sources of funding. A further part of her study was a review of current literature and research in the field of second language acquisition.

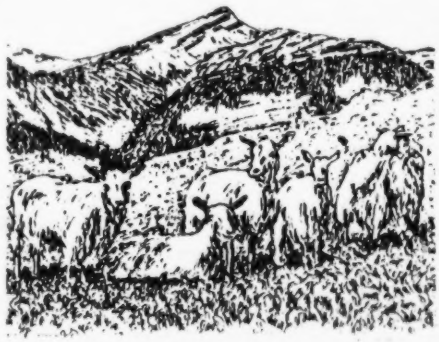
REGION XI: SAN BERNARDINO

Directors: James Moore, Mt. San Antonio College; Jack Mitchell, San Bernardino Valley College.

Mt. San Antonio College's ninth Writers Day Festival is set for 10 March 1984. Writers in the Mt. SAC district are currently laboring toward a 2 December 1983 deadline for submitting entries in the annual writing contest which is the focus of the entire activity. In this contest Mt. SAC students compete with each other; students in the district's more than thirty high schools compete with each other; residents of all ages in the college's geographical area compete with each other. In the ten writing categories, the three divisions will sling their best words on the page.

Prizes are awarded and a magazine comprised of prize-winning entries are distributed on the Festival's grand finale, 10 March, when six hundred participants are expected to hear a number of professional writers discuss anything that crosses their minds regarding the joys and sorrows of writing. The current lineup of speakers includes Ray Bradbury; *Los Angeles Times* book editor Art Seidenbaum; *LA Times* sports editor Bill Dwyre; *Sunset* magazine staff editor Jack Marlens; and a number of interesting possibilities, including Alice Walker, playwright Oliver Hailey, novelist-playwright Elizabeth Hailey, *LA Times* columnist Jack Smith, and poets Jack Grapes and Gary Snyder.

For further information on the Festival write to Jim Moore, coordinator, Mt. San Antonio College, 1100 No. Grand Avenue, Walnut, CA 91789.



GOATS

Rag and bone, down at the pits,
They hook with destiny and win.
By all that's Darwin they should be dead.
Defeat cries uncle and lets them rut.

Two pairs, they clank through potluck and munch.
Panzer-tough, their cuds. Billys
Are kids who love what glints, that toy
Badge, or can, to shoot their teeth at.

Over our junk they go, their butts
To you, Fogeys, reeking and free.
And caught, hauled in to shelter, kicking
Like urchins. Their city dump is moving.

Jerking away like a dirty rug.
Safety-first is killing them.
They're deep in soft soap, protective smells.
Survivors, they eye the wire and gnaw.

BILL BURNS
Rio Hondo College

PEDAGOGY/ PRODUCTIVITY

(Continued from Page 9)

tion" studies to the assembly line. Manufacturers of small objects (e.g., silicon chips) or large objects (e.g., Mack trucks) are well served by systems that keep track of numbers of objects produced (as well as numbers of subassemblies and numbers of employees required to achieve a certain production goal). But enterprises which do not manufacture objects (e.g., churches, schools, colleges, families) will find such language and such concepts of only marginal utility. Should such an enterprise allow its daily dialogue to be dominated by such talk it will quickly become distracted from its chief purposes. And if, say, a college begins to operate as though its essential function is marketing units and maintaining good systems of inventory control and cash flow, then its catalogue might just as well be titled "Sears, Roebuck, and Company." Under currently severe financing limits, many California community colleges are coming perilously close to becoming preoccupied with "productivity" and "efficiency" to the detriment of pedagogy. As real as the current financing difficulties are here in California, those difficulties do not justify turning ourselves inside out, becoming so enmeshed in defining and calculating means that we become disinterested in or distracted from our ends.

Let me go back a bit: colleges do not manufacture objects; colleges do not have countable products. And community colleges are no different from other colleges in this respect. Those educators who speak of "the student" as their product are engaging in hyperbole and self-delusion. If human beings are ever to be spoken of as "products," then only parents, the true producers, can use the term accurately. Educators who speak of "producing" units, contact hours, ADA, and WSCH/FTE ratios have confused means with ends. All of these terms are simply numerical shorthand for summarizing a student's rate of progress and level of achievement in the college. What matters—what *really* matters—is that those numbers do stand for actual progress and achievement. A college preoccupied with managing its numbers can easily become unconcerned whether those numbers represent significant human activity or simply, like some large hotel, its occupancy rate. That hasn't happened here—yet; but I hear a surprising number of faculty and staff say that's where we're headed.

In its simplest terms, a college is an enterprise organized so that minds encounter minds in ways that increase the range and power of those minds. We've become marvelously ingenious at the ways in which we can engage student minds with other minds: lectures, textbooks, slides, films, audio and video tapes, computers, closed circuit television, teleconferences. Obviously, the art of education lies in finding the right mix of these pedagogies so that student minds will be extended significantly in both range and power. These pedagogies—*and one other*: the direct encounter of professorial mind with student mind, one-to-one, in tutorials, seminars, laboratories, discussions, and written papers and reports. This pedagogy of individual encounter is crucial: every student's education must include enough of this kind of experience in order to test and make sense out of whatever he or she has derived from the other pedagogies. By its very nature, this particular pedagogy is not cost effective, cannot be cost effective, should not be cost effective. Program planning that does not accept that fact will produce a set of offerings, a curriculum, that produces high WSCH/FTE ratios with only marginal impact on student minds. Yet that is precisely the sort of planning I have heard proposed lately. And it is the sort of planning that defines all programs whose ratios fall below the mean as "troubled" or "needing study," making them prime candidates for "cut" lists.

My purpose in writing this essay is simple: to provoke some thoughtful discussion about the way the focus on "productivity" has begun to obscure our focus on our real purpose: arranging mind encounters. As a manager, I accept all of those notions; as an educator, I want them kept in their proper place, in the balanced perspective.

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA ECCTYC TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

inside english

Vol. XI, No. 3 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | March 1984

INSIDE *inside english*

ECCTYC Looks At Thinking and Writing

ECCTYC'S Fall 1983 Statewide Conference presented a variety of sessions: eight of them are covered in this issue of *i.e.* ESL issues and a telecourse—*The Write Course* are examined.
page 6

One conference attendee considers the technique of reader response and another reports on the dilemma facing the teacher-writer.
page 7

How the computer can help the English teacher and how non-writers become writers are discussed by two reporters.
page 8

One reporter reveals what she learned about burnout and another examines the political issues facing English departments.
page 9

A former member of a Writing Project tells how to spend a summer enjoying yourself *and* revitalizing your teaching.
page 4

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President's Message .....page 11
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Sacramento Scene.page 11

CRITICAL THINKING Defining the Critter and Staking out Its Territory

By MARLYS MAYFIELD
College of Alameda

Should English instructors teach critical thinking? "That's ridiculous," asserted a panelist at a recent American Philosophical Association conference. His campus, he continued, along with many others in California had made sure that the new California State University and Colleges (CSUC) General Education (GE) breadth requirement should and could be taught only by those properly qualified by a philosophy degree. For this he received some "Amens" and a round of applause from all present except me, one of those "unqualified" English instructors and one who, since January 1982, has taught successfully nine sections of a popular new course called "Critical Thinking in Reading and Writing."

The academic battle for territorial rights to teach critical thinking results not only from the newness of the subject, but more directly from the ambiguities and latitude in the 1980 Executive Order 338 of the CSUC Chancellor's Office. Section A of this Order ("a minimum of nine semester units in the English Language") puts oral and written communication together with "critical thinking to include consideration of the common fallacies of reasoning." Here critical thinking would seem to come under English and speech, but at another point the Order states that "each campus is to utilize its processes to establish its own agreements and

challenge its own creativity about what courses and disciplines shall be included within its GE program." Further, it states that "their objectives are perceived as interrelated elements, not as isolated fragments," and colleges are encouraged to consider "the possibility of integrative courses which feature the interrelationship among disciplines."

Thus, the Executive Order left it up to each college to decide for itself which departments and which courses could be revised or newly created or, better still, *integrated* to fulfill the new requirement. Moreover, the Order did not define *critical thinking* but listed instead some knowledge and skills a student should be expected to achieve. Each college was left to ponder what course materials taught in what manner would lead to the achievements the order described. By 1982 the problems of *what* and *how* were waived aside in the scramble to establish *who*. At present none of these questions has received any unanimity of opinion. A look at

the current course offerings selected by both community colleges and CSUC shows a range from formal and informal logic courses to differential calculus, from speech or the research paper or English 1A to courses of the basket-weaving variety. An integrative approach has not yet emerged. The trend, rather, is for more colleges to claim that they have been doing the undefined "it" all along—only their course descriptions need revision to show this.

In the meantime, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges (BGCCC) had issued its own new GE breadth requirements, stating that students should demonstrate on graduation critical thinking abilities (undefined) as well as complete some course in critical thinking (undefined) in some subject area (unspecified).

My own intense interest in teaching critical thinking began several months before the Executive Order was even issued; with me, as with so many others, it was simply an idea whose time had come. After teaching English composition in the Peralta district for over sixteen years, I was dissatisfied with the

limited time and assistance I could give students to help them fully understand analogies (the necessary components of clear definitions); the differences between facts, inferences, assumptions, opinions, and judgments; and the differences between concrete and abstract terms. I seriously considered developing a new kind of English transfer-level course that would focus on the thinking process involved in writing rather than on the production of weekly essays, that would work with logical fallacies and semantics, and that would stress critical analysis of contemporary writing. Such a course might serve as a prerequisite or adjunct to English 1A or 1B. In order to help the students I needed to understand—to help them understand—the thinking process and to be able to explain it in the simplest language possible.

I received released time for two quarters to study new research in cognitive psychology and to review curriculum materials and teaching techniques. I found much new research and a number of new curriculum programs to choose from. Of the latter, the most impressive was *Instrumental Enrichment*, a program developed by Professor Reuven Feuerstein, a protege of Jean Piaget. (For a description of this program see, "Learning How to Learn: An Israeli Pioneers the Teaching of Intelligence," *World Press Review*, October 1983, and "The Remedial Thinker," *Psychology Today*, October 1981.) I arranged to teach a remedial course called "Thinking Skills" on an experimental basis for

(Continued on Page 3)

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES
CALIFORNIA INTERSTATE
ECCTYC

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inside english welcomes articles, reviews, and other writing of interest to instructors of English in two-year colleges. Submissions should be limited to no more than eight double-spaced typed pages. Although a detailed policy and style sheet is available on request, in general follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* and *The MLA Style Sheet* (Second Edition). Send manuscripts and requests (with a self-addressed envelope to which stamps are clipped) to Barbara Bilson, Editor, *inside english*, English Department, Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

The editor reserves the right to edit manuscripts so that their format and language conform with the style established in the journal.

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Letters

Dear Editor

i.e. A JOURNAL, NOT JUST A NEWSLETTER

Your journal deserves that appellation much more than most journals I get do. I thought the issues I got were readable, intelligent, unpompous, and useful—even to an East Coaster.

I'm sorry I didn't know about ECCTYC long ago.

BOB BOYNTON
Boynton/Cook Publishers

I receive at least a dozen newsletters (see "*i.e.*: A Journal..." above) each month, but only *inside english* do I read from cover to cover, in detail. It is informative, intelligent, useful, attractive, and well edited. I also appreciate the variety of subjects covered and the system of distribution, through English departments.

NORMA SULLIVAN
San Diego City College

GRAFFITI/GRAFFITO

The following graffito, in two parts, was found by my husband at the College of Marin, where he teaches.

Our live's we work,
And works a bore.
If life's worth living?
Then whats living for?

To learn to use apostrophes
properly
Try Eng. 80-81!

HARRIET POLT SCHMITT
Merritt College

i.e. WRITERS PRAISED

The writers [in the December 1983 issue] got into expressing some serious and carefully thought-out ideas. [Fred] Fisher ["Caring Is Not Enough"] raises some of the real problems and expresses them very well. It is only too bad that he can't offer some ways around the problem. [Richard] Tracey's analysis ["On Failure"] is careful and thoughtful, even though Shaughnessy's method relies, perhaps, on a bit too much inference to be logically satisfying.

GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

I've completed my second year of teaching remedial writing at a California community college, and I have some questions. Perhaps these questions will stimulate thinking, or hopefully someone will respond by writing an article or articles for *inside english*.

—What instruction is needed during the writing process?

—What qualities of an instructor produce the best results?

—How do you achieve personal attention with a class of thirty?

—How do you get students to care about their writing?

—How do you handle student-teacher writing conferences?

—What are approaches to student-peer and class writing critiques?

—What are some sound guidelines in correcting essays?

—What predrafting or prewriting procedures are helpful?

—What is a reasonable amount of editing?

—Is there a place for fill-in notebooks in teaching writing?

—Is there transfer value in students copying writing models?

—What is good writing?

—What is a college-level paper?

—How are good paragraphs constructed?

—Which is better—the method approach to writing an essay or the content approach?

—How do you instruct mechanics—grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage?

—What are students' responsibilities in correcting their own writing deficiencies?

—What techniques can make a class more productive?

—What writing instruction is most helpful for other college courses and for living?

These are some basic questions I've encountered during my teaching experience, and I recognize the need for continued learning. Fortunately, the spirit of *inside english* enables English instructors to share their expertise and to raise the level of our profession.

HUGH C. HYDE
Southwestern College

Notices

WRITING LAB DIRECTORY

If you wish to list your writing lab or center in the 1984 directory now being compiled, please request a copy of the form to be completed for your entry. All forms must be completed and returned before 15 June 1984. The cost of purchasing the directory will depend on duplicating and mailing expenses, and ordering information will be available in a future issue of the *Writing Lab Newsletter*.

Eor further information and a copy of the entry form, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Muriel Harris, Department of English, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

FOUR SUMMER PROGRAMS

New York University offers four programs in English education for personal and professional growth. Participants may study from four days to eight weeks and earn up to twelve credits (or attend on a noncredit basis).

26-29 June; 2-19 July: **Seventh Annual Conference and Institute on English Education:** "Mediating Interpretations—Transactions in the Teaching of English." This conference, held in New York City and cosponsored by the NCTE, features Walker Gibson, Susan Horton, Louise M. Rosenblatt, and others speaking on critical theories, language arts, literature, and the humanities. Related graduate courses are offered by the institute that follows the conference.

25 June to 16 August: **British Perspectives on English Education.** Participants in this twelve-credit program for MA, EdD, or PhD students visit British schools and study British approaches to the teaching of language, literature, and composition with James Britton, Nancy Martin, and others.

2-27 July: **First Anglo-American Institute:** "Leadership and the Climate for Teaching and Learning." In this certificate-bearing, noncredit program English department heads and supervisors can compare perspectives on the operation of English departments by meeting with outstanding British educators and observing and participating in actual British classes.

2 July to 24 August: **Humanities.** Participants in this twelve-credit program will study major works of literature and the arts and their interrelationships within the rich milieu of Europe. The program, based in Paris, includes travel to the Loire Valley, Versailles, Chartres, and other places in France.

For further information write: Office of Summer Sessions, Overseas and Special Programs; School of Education, Health, Nursing, and Arts Professions; New York University; 60 Press Building, Washington Square; New York, NY. 10003

SUMMER IN PENNSYLVANIA

10-13 July: **The Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition.** This conference offers a generous mixture of plenary and special-interest sessions; an opportunity for learning, leisure, reflection on composition and rhetoric, and discussions with conference consultants and colleagues. The consultants include Wayne C. Booth (University of Chicago), Peter Elbow (SUNY, Stony Brook), James L. Kinneavy (University of Texas), Lester Faigley (UT), Michael Halloran (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), Richard L. Larson (Herbert Lehman College, CUNY, and editor of *College Composition and Communication*), and Janice C. Redish (Document Design Center, American Institutes for Research).

For further conference information write: Mary Ann Solic, The Pennsylvania State University, 410 Keller Building, University Park, PA 16802.

Abstracts for papers on subjects pertinent to rhetoric and composition must be submitted no later than 15 April. Send these and proposals for panel discussions and workshops to Professor Jack Selzer, Department of English, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802.

inside english Deadlines

October 1984 Issue
15 August 1984

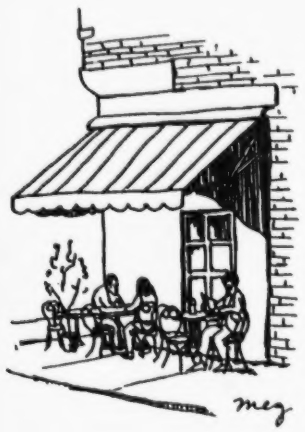
December 1984 Issue
1 October 1984

CRITICAL THINKING

(Continued from Page 1)

one year and thus became eligible for the teacher training program offered by Instrumental Enrichment.

In the course of that year I learned a whole new perspective on teaching that made me feel that this was the graduate school of education I had been looking for. I had a new set of terms to describe the kinds of recurring problems that I had found in student compositions. I could now diagnose deficiencies as blurred and sweeping perceptions, impulsivity, lack of verbal tools and concepts that affect discrimination, lack of temporal orientation, inability to perceive or define a problem. Such diagnoses seemed far more intriguing and promising to me than the more

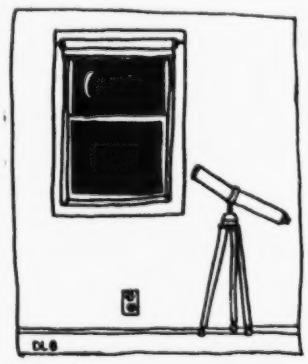


familiar labels of "illiterate" or "needs more thought."

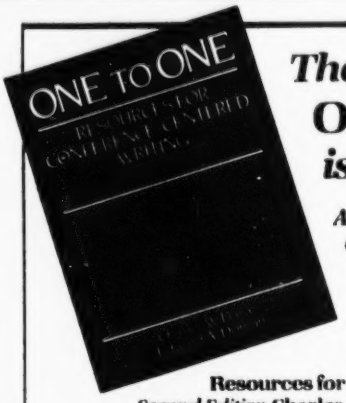
In spring 1981 the College of Alameda (COA) recognized the need to develop a new transferable course to fulfill the criteria of Executive Order 338. I submitted a course description for "Critical Thinking in Reading and Writing" based on the course I had developed during the previous year. It was approved by the curriculum committee at COA, which also approved a formal and informal logic course "Introduction to Philosophy" taught by the philosophy department. Our students now had two options for meeting the requirement, and many have taken both, sometimes using my course as a helpful bridge to the more advanced logic offering.

Although a number of new critical texts existed, all appeared too difficult for our students and not written with an awareness of cognitive skills. So I wrote my own: ***Thinking for Yourself: An Introduction to Critical Thinking Through Writing***. I began with some material on facts and inferences I had used in teaching composition, together with some descriptive writing exercises that stressed close and accurate observing. In the beginning of the course I would give the students a photograph to describe what many would agree included a bare room, a juke box, and a baby. But others would identify what they saw in that room as a refrigerator, a stove, a dresser, a monkey, or a dog. By having the students write out their descriptions and read them to one another, I helped them see that they had something more to learn about observing before going on into more complex problems of the analysis, criticism, and advocacy of ideas. The existing critical thinking texts began much too soon with an exclusive study of argumentation, assuming that the students had already mastered these skills of inductive reasoning, careful observing, and obtaining accurate data. I began my course not with argumentation, but with the definition of critical thinking that I evolved: *to consciously perceive, analyze, organize, and evaluate according to a standard*. From this my teaching objectives developed:

1. to approach critical thinking through the creative process of composition, moving gradually from this experience to critical analysis of the thoughts of others;
2. to develop writing exercises that require students to examine and write about their own thinking process while focussing on the description of mundane objects;
3. to provide clear definitions of the essential terms needed to understand the problems inherent in language and thinking;
4. to wean students away from pocket dictionaries to a confident use of an unabridged dictionary for the study of definitions;
5. to move the students on a gradient from descriptive writing to reports and critical analysis, at the same time teaching them inductive and deductive reasoning, the basics of semantics and argumentation, and the major logical fallacies;
6. to make the course lively and current, inclusive of a minority perspective, requiring active involvement in reading, understanding, and discussing contemporary controversial public issues.



From the perspective of two years later, I see that my students and I have been served well by these objectives, although their full implementation has meant expanding my textbook from the early days of xeroxing pages to writing three hundred pages that have gone through four full revisions.



The Word is Out:
ONE TO ONE
is Inside English

Announcing the new edition of the only book for conferencing...

ONE TO ONE
Resources for Conference-Centered Writing
Second Edition **Charles W. Dawe and Edward A. Dornan**
paper/400 pages/with Instructor's Edition/Now available for examination!

Adopted by hundreds of composition instructors across the country, the first edition of this unique text, based on the "Garrison Method" of conference-centered writing, was an enormous success — due solely to the enthusiasm of so many of their colleagues. Now, reflecting the classroom experiences of writing instructors *and* students, ONE TO ONE has been revised throughout to include:

- a rewritten chapter on the deductive essay — now emphasizing process and revision
- 20% more writing assignments
- a unique "Daily Writing" section
- a new Chapter 4, "Paragraph Structure"
- a new combined chapter on examples (specific and typical)
- an expanded "Index for Writers"
- basic material on grammar and punctuation — now integrated throughout the text
- a new *Instructor's Edition* — containing both the complete text and the Instructor's Manual

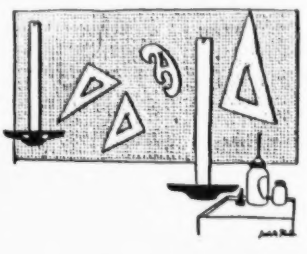
Little, Brown has a California Office that you can call or write for information about this or our other English texts, examination copies, etc. We're located at: 508 San Anselmo Avenue, #3, San Anselmo, CA 94960, (415) 459-7920.

LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY
College Division, 34 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02106

"Critical Thinking in Reading and Writing," which began with eight students, is now a popular course—two full sections (thirty to forty students) each quarter—even though our general enrollment has decreased. And although the course is demanding, it has developed a reputation for offering students a place where everyone's ideas are heard and respected—and subject to challenge—and where thinking "errors" are a source of interest and learning, not of embarassment and failure.

I found the original format of the one-hour lecture unsuitable for this course; now it is taught in two-hour segments. This permits sufficient time for small group or full class discussions that need to follow the lecture, writing exercises, or problem assignments. In the course students receive grades based on (1) attendance and participation, (2) completion of a notebook of short descriptive assignments, (3) a report comparing styles and viewpoints of four periodicals ranging from far right to far left, and (4) a take-home final research exam that requires a critical analysis and comparison of four different political or social viewpoints on one controversial subject.

In the space of this article I cannot give a full or satisfactory account of a course that took me four years and a textbook to develop. An in-depth discussion of some of my writing assignments has to wait for a later article. My objective here is to make English instructors aware that Executive Order 338 and the BGCCC do offer us the latitude to develop some new and creative approaches for teaching critical thinking. I also hope that many others will be interested, as I was, in developing the kind of realistic "remedial bridge" that so many of our students need to reach the actual and demonstrated skills of critical thinking. Above all, my purpose here is not to argue that only English instructors should teach critical thinking (as Mr. Panelist should not argue that only philosophy instructors should teach it); rather, I argue for an integrated approach. For me the ideal would be for us to combine the content and pedagogical insights from philosophy,



English, rhetoric, and cognitive psychology—to make critical thinking a prevalent and engrossing subject for study across the whole curriculum. The first step in this direction is for colleagues from all areas to learn from one another, instead of striving competitively to stake out our exclusive territories.

REDWOOD WRITING PROJECT '83

A Change of Pace and a Change of Attitude

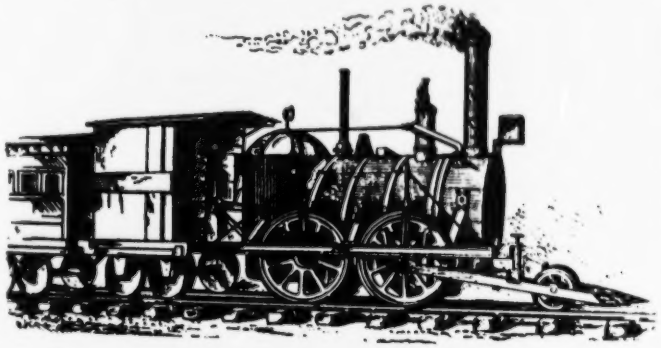
by WILLIAM K. HOOPES
College of the Redwoods

After ten years of teaching lab and composition courses at a junior college, I was ready for a change of pace. When the Redwood Writing Project was advertised, I did some research and found that it was an outgrowth of the Bay Area Writing Project which has gained national recognition for its excellence. I applied for the summer session, was accepted, and found myself involved in a well-planned, stimulating program.

At first I was, I admit, not without my doubts about its merit. First, there were only two college instructors enrolled, and these two were teaching assistants at Humboldt State University. Most of the rest were from elementary schools with a few high school teachers added. That being the case, I wondered how I would learn anything that might apply to my "level." And finally, I wondered how I could generate the interest necessary to last twenty, six-hour sessions.

Fortunately, I discovered that I could learn from those around me and that my idea of "level" as being a barrier was invalid. My discovery occurred during a presentation I made which explained how I taught the concept of audience. I had our class write three brief letters, all written about the same topic: money. The class wrote one to a very close friend, one to a parent, and one to someone whom they didn't know—someone who was an official, such as a judge, a bank president, or a congressman. After reading several of these aloud, we examined the differences in tone, diction, and sentence structure, and then we discussed what conscious and unconscious decisions writers had made in writing to a specific audience. I remember pointing out that, at the college level, we stressed audience, and, given the proper guidence, students could respond correctly to the demands created by writing to a specific audience. One of the first grade teachers, Penne O'Gara, said she also taught audience and had noted changes in students' work when they were submitting it to different people.

This threw me for a second. How could a six year old understand concepts taught to eighteen year olds? Penne explained that her students responded differently if they were going to take it home or if they were going to present it to an official, such as the principal. I saw then that the concept I taught at my level was important and useful at other levels, and from that point on I listened more carefully than I had before.



I also began writing on a daily basis. Here I had been teaching writing for ten years, yet I had written very little other than departmental memos. I remember thinking of the old saying, "Those who can't, teach." I learned that I still can write, even though I teach. In addition, what I encountered while I wrote seemed to parallel that which my students encountered while they wrote. For instance, having writer's block forced me to use some of the methods I had off-handedly suggested to my students. At times I searched desperately for the right words and the right phrases. In short, I had to do what I had been asking others to do. Because of this experience, I am able to speak to my classes about writing, more or less writer to writer, and offer them real advice from experience rather than cliches from handbooks.

I did last the five weeks, and it was a time for reflection, almost a mini-sabbatical. As I went through the writing assignments, I could not help looking at my own assignments. Only now I viewed them from the writer's perspective and made some necessary adjustments. If you have the chance to participate in any Bay Area Writing Project programs, I'd suggest that you seriously consider applying. You will probably learn from the program and those around you.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Just What Is *inside english* Looking For?

The following is reprinted by request.

At the recent ECCTYC conference in La Jolla, many people gave *inside english* high praise; others voiced their wish for one kind of article or another. When I invited these *i.e.* readers to submit some of their writing to the journal, most said, "Well, just what is *inside english* looking for?" I hope that what follows will answer that question and will encourage more of you to submit manuscripts to *i.e.*

Submissions to *inside english* should be geared to one of the five departments: feature articles, reviews, letters, and regional news.

FEATURE ARTICLES

Feature articles should address a topic in some depth. They might explore a philosophical or pedagogical position, detail a particular program, investigate some larger political issue and its relationship to the English classroom. Looking through the pages of previous issues of *i.e.*, one can find articles about the importance of literature courses in a community college, the question of television as an instructional tool, and the value of oral reading in a composition course. One might consider exploring the implications of the suggested changes in funding remedial courses or consider presenting a rationale for writing-across-the-curriculum programs. Feature articles allow writers to explore a subject in one thousand to eighteen hundred words.

SHORT ARTICLES

These articles, from three hundred to nine hundred words, present the writer's ideas in more limited focus. Here a writer might solve a specific problem — "What I Did When . . .": What I did when the class cried in unison, "We hate poetry"; What I did when the film of *As You Like It* didn't show up on time; What I did when only five people showed up for the department meeting. Short articles provide writers a forum to briefly express their ideas on a favorite topic: why a writing teacher should write; the perils and pleasures of a teacher exchange.

REVIEWS

Although a majority of the reviews appearing in *i.e.* have been of textbooks, the reviews are by no means limited to that category. *inside english* has printed reviews of books that have motivated the readers to reconsider their teaching (Doug Lane's review of Henry Miller's *On Writing*) or that have confronted readers with new ideas about writing or language or learning or teaching (Joe Fitschen's discussion of Gregory Bateson's *Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity*). The reviews may also evaluate media programs (such as Suzanne Sekula's review of the Center for the Humanities slide-tape program "Grammar: Everything You Wanted to Know About Usage") and computer programs that have value for the classroom or the learning lab. Reviews should be from five hundred to twelve hundred words and should include at the end of the text all pertinent publishing information, including cost.

LETTERS

This is your chance to disagree with or support ideas that have been expressed in the *i.e.* articles: this is your chance to express yourself on any topic of your choice — and to do so in a page or two. Letters should be limited to five hundred words (if you want to write more, why not write a short article?) and should include at their conclusion your name and your college. Any point of view may be expressed in the letters.

REGIONAL NEWS

Too often we don't know what our colleagues are doing: what articles or books they have written, what innovations they are attempting in their classes, what papers they are delivering at what conferences, what grants they have received. "Upstate/Downstate" provides a place for these bits of information about all of you. But we have to know about you to print about you. Send your brief items to the Regional Editors.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The editor of *inside english* reserves the right to edit any manuscript to fit the requirements of space and to conform with the NCTE's *Guidelines for Nonsexist Use of Language* and with *i.e.*'s style.

STYLE

Anyone interested may send for the "*inside english* Style Sheet." In general, *inside english* follows *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 13th edition, and *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* in matters of spelling and hyphenation. Manuscripts should avoid sexist language, excessive nominalization, and overuse of the passive.

(Continued on Page 12)

not so, e.e.

To e.e. cummings
A leaf falling meant
Loneliness.

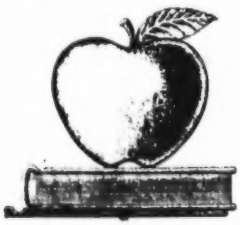
To me
A leaf falling means
Losing control
Letting go
Floating in the Wind's embrace
Seeking a new resting place
Where the fallen leaf
Now waits . . .
To be crushed or crunched or blown
Away . . .
Until the Earth claims it
And uses it
To bring forth . . . NEW LIFE.

e.e., I'd rather be like
My leaf
Than yours.

SISTER ADELE EDWARDS
Mount St. Mary's College

ECCTYC'S Biennial Statewide Conference: Fall 1983

The English Coucil of California Two-Year Colleges held its Biennial Statewide Conference, 3-4 November 1983, at the La Jolla Village Inn, near San Diego. The several hundred Conference participants selected which sessions to attend from a program of sixteen different ones, covering topics as diverse as "Chairing the English Department," "Burnout: Options for Growth," "Favorite Reading," and "The Computer and the English Teacher." The articles that follow report on eight of the sixteen sessions and reflect the writers' personal responses to the sessions they attended.



REPORTING ON ESL

"Useful Concepts in Practical Linguistics" was the title of the presentation given by Dr. Ann Johns of California State University, San Diego, at the ECCTYC Statewide Conference. Dr. Johns, whose impressive background includes teaching English to non-English speakers and teachers of English in such exotic places as Uganda and China, gave an hour and a half of her time to share ideas with a number of other teachers of English as a Second Language.

Her presentation included such practical information as which textbooks currently on the market work best with ESL students and which techniques are most effective in the ESL classroom. Dr. Johns also elaborated on current areas of research and relevant journals and newsletters of interest to teachers of non-English speaking students.

Specifically, Dr. Johns discussed schema theory, the nature of coherent/cohesive texts, discourse signaling, and discourse hierarchies.

The group of teachers present was able to work with sample selections from textbooks to look at cohesion in text materials and at the restructuring of text passages to make them more meaningful for the ESL student.

Although interesting and informative to the specialist in linguistics, the lengthy theoretical presentation prohibited Dr. Johns from treating the last two sections of her outline—"Classroom Applications" and "Trends in ESL Education." Obviously, Dr. Johns has considerable information to offer the teacher of English as a Second Language; unfortunately, she did not have time to bring it all together for her listeners during this short session.

JANICE RANK
Victor Valley College

THE WRITE COURSE IS THE WRONG COURSE

Sometime next year, *The Write Course* may be available at your local television consortium. Brought to you by the same group that designed the now discredited *Writing for a Reason, The Write Course* consists of thirty half-hour telelessons, a study guide, examinations, a faculty and administrative guide, and a textbook.

At the recent ECCTYC conference, the telecourse was previewed for an invitation-only group of about forty English instructors from colleges throughout the state. The letter of invitation stated that we were gathered together "to offer implementation suggestions that would enhance its *[The Write Course]* use as a supplement to on-campus instructors or as a telecourse for distance learners." At the dinner meeting itself, Harryette Stover, Faculty Content Specialist for the Dallas County Community College District Center for Telecommunications, was more direct. "We have a specific problem with this course. *Writing for a Reason* was declared nontransferable by the [California] state colleges and universities . . . How do we disassociate ourselves from the old course? . . . How do we approach faculty? How do we approach potential users? How do we approach people so that they will give us a hearing?"

Ms. Stover got quite a reaction to her presentation, a response not specific to her public-relations questions but rather to issues that need to be addressed first.

WHO IS THE CLASS FOR?

Representatives of the Dallas Center for Communications described the class as designed for the nontraditional student, "a student who would not otherwise be on campus." This student would probably be terrified of writing, maybe of school. It would probably be his/her first college course. Not having face-to-face contact with an instructor would be a "real plus." Though "not for all institutions, not for all teachers, not for all students," *The Write Course* is intended to be a university-transferable course, a freshman composition equivalent.

My response to this is a number of whys.

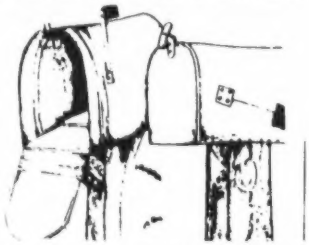
—*Why* do we want to attract marginal students to a demanding university-transferable composition course, a course that teaches the sophisticated writing skills essential to university and white-collar success? In my district, students are placed in skill-appropriate writing courses, and only when certain criteria are met can the student be placed in freshman composition. This process makes the class more meaningful for both instructor and students.

—*Why* would we want to make lack of face-to-face student-teacher contact a "selling point"? Or, as Harryette Stover asked, "How much do we need student-teacher interaction, and how much do we think we need it?" This question raised the significant issues of teacher motivation, writing as a process, and opportunities for cheating.

—*Why* else teach but for the joy of interaction, the satisfaction of knowing when and what to push, the learning that takes place in both directions? Much of the literature about the composing process lauds the importance of teacher/student contact, of "grabbing" the student at just the right time, of asking questions that engage the student in the writing process.

If the teacher is central here, so is the process. Students need immediate response. If I am marking papers that are mailed in and then mailing them back, there is too much delay in commenting on the paper; "dialoging" becomes impossible. But even more important, by writing (or talking) all my comments at once, I have negated the writing process.

To my knowledge, *The Write Course* writers have not addressed this process issue. They answer the contact question by referring to a telephone hotline manned by English instructors. (In Dallas, the requirement is three office



hours a week for telephone conferencing.) The logistics of a telephone critique seem ponderous, with both instructor and student needing copies of the same paper, line numbered for referral. Would a student want to make revisions while copies are in transit? Does the mail process negate the revision process?

These points apply not only to freshman composition but to any writing course. An ECCTYC conference seminar "The Puente Project: Transforming Non-Writers to Writers" dealt with just such issues. Student-student interaction and timely instructor-student interaction and intervention can be crucial to the learning of the skill. And the work with the student cannot be done all at once, for it is an interactive process requiring sensitivity and immediacy of contact.

Another issue not addressed concerns the wide-open opportunities for "ghosting." How can this not be a problem when students are mailing in their assignments?

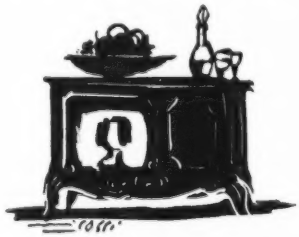
HOW IS *THE WRITE COURSE* PRESENTED AND WHAT IS ITS CONTENT?

The thirty telelessons are presented as a continuing sitcom, which takes place in the studio of an independent video-production company producing a college telecourse on writing. The cast of characters represent the spectrum of writing skills, from writers to non-writers. Within the dramatizations are mini-documentaries, interviews with professional writers and writing authorities. The one lesson screened for the attendees at the session was slick, professional, and—judging by the laughter during its showing—appriciated by some.

I, however, hated it. I was bored, and I resented what I saw as a "put down" of my students in the persona of Darwin Sands. I disliked the lowest-common-denominator appeal of the sitcom format. But mostly, I hated the passivity of watching a film about "Limiting the Topic." I firmly believe that learning a skill demands active participation. Students can read a text for standard information about writing basics; they don't have to watch television to get the same thing. The learning must be made real in the doing. And for me, teaching a skill requires more dialogue than monologue to be effective.

Some of the audience thought the telelesson a great motivator, showing how people unsure of their writing skills could come to grips with their problems. As a motivator, it works for me like an exercise videotape. I sit and eat fudge and dream of my thin self. I need a class and group pressure to go through the painful and necessary gyrations I see on an exercise show.

But, *chacun a son gout.* In the best of all possible worlds, instructors could choose what would work best for them in their classes. The thirty telelessons would be available in college audio-visual centers for instructors to screen. If one or more tapes appealed, these could be shown as an adjunct to a course, perhaps used while conferring with individual students. Or, for teachers to whom the whole series ap-



peals, perhaps they would choose to use *The Write Course* as an aid to their instruction and in person face-to-face guidance.

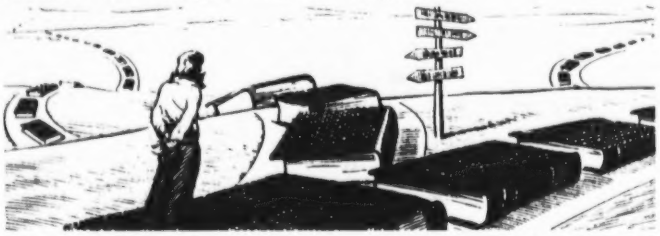
But the best of all possible worlds died a long time before Proposition 13. And I doubt that many colleges have extra money to provide *The Write Course* as an optional course enhancer rather than the thing itself. If we can "ice" the cake, fine. But if not, let the students eat cake!

LINDA PRUSOFF
Mesa College

READER—RESPONSE THEORY: A TOOL FOR TEACHING LITERATURE

My students occasionally seem uninvolved with the reading selections in literature class. About 1980, after reading a few articles about reader-response theory, I suspected that lack of involvement might be due to my inept use of the tools of New Criticism. I did not abandon those tools, but I did try some assignments from reader-response theorists like David Bleich (*Reading and Feelings: An Introduction to Subjective Criticism*, Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1975) to overcome what they see as the tendency of New Criticism to treat literature as an object that exsists quite independently of the reader and produce, consequently, an estrangement between reader and literary work. Following Bleich, I would ask my students to pick the most important line in a poem. They should make that choice by watching their responses to the poem as they read, trying to become aware of what lines especially hold them and then trying to figure out why. I would have them bring these "responses"—in writing—to class. They would exchange their responses, and I would run off a sampling for the next meeting.

Inevitably there was a great range, especially in what you might call engagement. There were always students who didn't realize I was asking them for a "personal" response, and their choice of most important line was usually based on what they saw as the overall meaning of the poem as a printed object on the page, something quite separate from them. At the other end of the range, there were responses that were so idiosyncratic that they had no connection with the poem at all. (My favorite was the one I received from one young woman who narrowed her choice down to the single word "horse" in an assigned poem. For two pages, she explained that she had chosen that word as most important because of the wonderful experiences she had had with horses. She had responded to the word "horse" in the subtitle of Roethke's "Elegy for Jane,"—"My student, Thrown by a *Horse*,"—and had missed the rather basic fact that Jane was dead.) But in the middle were those responses in which students grappled with what had led them to choose particular lines. Often they could tie their choices to personal experiences that seemed to be influencing their responses to the poem. The students uniformly enjoyed these assignments, and subsequent discussions of the poems were somehow more "engaged," with a



greater level of enthusiasm and participation even as we turned to some of the more traditional concerns of a literature class, like the poet's use of metaphor and rhythm. These assignments were successful for me in overcoming the barriers that poetry created for many students: the students became aware of their own responses to the poem before we turned toward the poem as as "object" on the printed page.

Nonetheless, I always felt that I left two problems unresolved. First, I did not feel there was enough time, either in class or during office hours, to take the method far enough to lead individual students to a deeper understanding of what was shaping their responses to the literature. There were many leads in the individual responses that I had no time to follow up. I heeded Bleich's warning not to turn the class into a psychotherapy session where the students' responses became the object which the teacher interpreted for them —just another and more frightening version of "the teacher's always got the answer." Nor did I have the skill to help them go very far with the interpretations on their own. Second, many times the remembered incidents with which the students were associating the poem and which they perceived as influencing their responses to the poem, carried a tone quite different from the tone of the poem itself.

Even though I led students to see these differences in tone when we discussed the responses I had run off for the class ("How does the mood of this response compare with the mood created in the poem?" I would ask), there remained all of the unduplicated responses on which I could write notes but which, once again, I did not have the opportunity to discuss individually with the students to help them see where their own experiences and biases and preconceptions might be leading them into a response that was not quite "true" to the poem itself. In fact, I had the feeling that for Bleich there was no response that was irrelevant, or perhaps more accurately, that this issue of "correspondence" between the tone of a response and the tone of a literary work was irrelevant to him. In fact, what did it mean for me to talk of the "tone of the poem itself" if, following reader response theory, I rejected the notion of literature as an object apart from the reader? I did not get very far in solving these problems although Bleich's assignments remained useful for me.

For Lila Geller of CSUC Dominguez Hills and Catherine Gannon of CSUC San Bernardino, Wolfgang Iser provides a theory of reader response that helps them in the literature classroom. On the one hand it avoids New Criticism's treating literature as an object and, on the other hand, it avoids what they see in the work of Norman Holland and David Bleich as the loss of the literary work in a psychotherapy session. Their presentation offered a suggestion of how to avoid the kind of "authoritative footnoting" that teachers are prone to, and at the same time, the "anything-goes" of the bull-session or of the perhaps poorly-managed sessions that I sometimes had with Bleich's methods. The literature does give some guideposts.

The key terms Geller and Gannon used were CUTS and GAPS. "Cuts" are jumps from one plot line to another. "Gaps" refer to gaps in the information available to the reader. Both should stimulate the aware reader to speculate. In *Hamlet*, for example, when Polonius sends to find out what Laertes is doing in Paris, the reader does not know what, in fact, Laertes is up to. Later, it is also reasonable for the reader to speculate about what Ophelia must think when Hamlet kills her father. These gaps are not questions that a teacher asks after the students have finished reading the play; they are genuine indeterminacies, discovered by the readers themselves, where the readers have a role *during* the reading. Here Geller and Gannon distinguished between useless and useful gaps. In the above examples, for instance, we later learn that it is not important what Laertes is doing in Paris; the fact of Polonius' sending a spy to find out tells us something about Polonius. On the other hand, Ophelia's later madness tells us this may be a gap worth filling. In both cases, the students are led to read more closely in order to sense where they need to know more. Moreover, the literary work is not a finished object from which the teacher extracts the one correct and hidden meaning; reading is a linear experience, and the students' right and responsibility to speculate are validated by the teachers. The hope, of course, is that this sensitivity to cuts and gaps will help the students acquire tools to use as they read on their own, later.

A deficiency in the presentation, in my view, was that while Geller and Gannon gave us many examples of gaps in specific literary works so that we would understand this concept, they did not give us sufficient information on how to introduce the concept in the classroom so that the students would learn how to apply the concept themselves rather than to follow just a new set of "footnotes" set forth by the teacher.

BERT WOODRUFF
Fresno City College

WRITING FICTION AND TEACHING ENGLISH

Richard Booth—former editor of *inside english*, instructor of English at Crafton Hills College, and fiction writer with a novel ready to be published—told those of us attending his session that he had decided to depart from his "assignment" and, instead, to ask some questions.

IS A TEACHER OF ENGLISH A BETTER TEACHER FOR BEING A WORKING WRITER? Yes, we generally agreed. A writer-teacher understands more concretely the problems a writing assignment might entail. Such a teacher tends to be more empathetic with students and more able to help them. Writer-teachers can be aware, especially, of the importance of revision, revision, and more revision, and of the time required. We must be aware of putting too much pressure on a good student who writes well and cause her, like the one Mr. Booth mentioned, to plagiarize a story in a desperate attempt to please.

DOES READING STUDENT WRITING AFFECT THE WRITER-TEACHER'S STYLE? Yes, it does. However, this leads to other questions: What style are we aspiring to? What is our purpose? Are we aiming to write commercial fiction or great literature? No agreement emerged from the discussion that ensued.

IS FICTION "GREATER" THAN NON-FICTION? George Orwell said that a writer writes because he has a large ego to be fed, a sense of aesthetics, a political message to impart, and a sense of history. If this is so, can we rightly consider fiction "greater" than non-fiction? We tend to think of fiction as "art" and non-fiction as "non-art." (Consider the distinction we draw between composition and "creative writing.") Although most of us agreed that this dichotomy is not right, that much can be said for both forms, some of us held out for the distinction: that only in fiction can truth truly be told.

HOW DOES ONE FIND THE TIME TO WRITE FICTION *AND* TO TEACH? This perennial problem plagues all of us, and each of us deals with it differently. Some writer-teachers curtail almost all outside activities *except* writing. Others devise systems of paper correction (like the Garrison method) to lighten the paper load (although a system like the Garrison method does exact a toll, draining the teacher's energy). Some have returned to the traditional method in some classes (as a rest from Garrison?).

In addition to exploring the questions Mr. Booth asked, several in the

group suggested various ways to "recharge" one's energies for both teaching and writing. Mr. Booth strongly recommended the word processor as an aid to writing; it's fast, it eases the task of revision, and it allows for experimenting without the laborious, frustrating deleting and rehandwriting or retyping.

By NORMA SULLIVAN
San Diego City College

A NEW ODD COUPLE

At the November ECCTYC statewide conference in La Jolla, one presentation provided new insights to a new dilemma. Just as politics sometimes makes strange bedfellows, so the computer occasionally creates odd couples—in this case, as the title of the session indicated, the Computer and the English Teacher (presented by Bob Fredin, Mira Costa College; Burl Hogins, San Diego Mesa College; and moderated by Bert Woodruff, Fresno City College).

To get past the reluctance the computer provokes and the intimidation it sometimes engenders, Bob Fredin proposed some analogies to adjust perspective.

For example, give someone a nail in a paper bag and assign the task of driving that nail into a board. With only the human hand and a paper bag at work, the nail will likely be driven farther into the flesh than into the board. Try another tool—a rock. The nailer will be more successful this time though there still may be damage to the nailer and perhaps to the nailed, too.

Move up the ladder of technology to a hammer and see the expected results: one efficiently driven nail and one proud and satisfied nailer who has used the right tool for the right task.

To illustrate further, Bob pointed out that probably all the people in the conference room were wearing wristwatches and that we have confidence without qualms in such devices. We may have left behind more natural instruments (the hourglass, the clepsydra, the sun dial), but we keep appointments, adhere to schedules, and take our medicines on time with the new devices. Our move from analog to digital, completely away from solar or stellar time-telling, doesn't trouble us much.

We are willing to use sophisticated technology in sophisticated places. When the Apollo 13 mission encountered an emergency which required a mid-course correction, a computer performed in 83 minutes an operation that would have kept a person and pencil busy for 1,400,298 years. With such massive timesaving possible, consider the gain to the English teacher who needs to make a mid-course correction: one million, four hundred thousand, two hundred ninety-seven years, eleven months, thirty days, twenty-two hours, and thiry-seven minutes—nearly enough time to correct another set of papers.

Not only is time saved with the computer, but space also is gained. Miles of bookselves are no longer required to store printed volumes. Electronic books residing in the computer can be indexed and cross-referenced for ease of research. The computer can search itself for specific information or quotes. Electronic books will have no bindings to crack, no covers to dust, no pages to mildew, oxidize, or rip.

In addition to space and time, the computer provides a communication network with the installation of a *modem*. The telephone link makes distant access and nearly unlimited information available. Access to UPI or Associated Press for instant news or connection with colleagues through a bulletin board operation keeps teachers in touch with the world and each other at the flick of a key. Other personal advantages accrue: from your own keyboard, make airline reservations or hotel accommodations for your next conference.

Other applications of the computer deal with the writing process. Round robin sessions among computer users may produce collective novels. Word processing programs make rapid revisions a reality. One command changes a character's name or eye color throughout a lengthy work.

The computer can also help to organize classroom life through rapid note-taking, test generation, and analysis of tests—placement, exit, or competency. Test scores become obtainable in two minutes. By using the computer, the student may be freed from the pencil-to-paper commitment and so from crippling self-criticism in early writing stages. The possibility exisits of including pre-packaged books and syllabus at student registration to afford the benefits that early possession of course materials confers.

Is the electronic marvel without disadvantages? Hardly. Information can be lost if improperly stored. Not all problems lend themselves to binary solutions, but "treeing one's way down" may reduce time, labor, and computations. And invasion of privacy remains a concern.

But as a controlled tool, the computer can do nonhuman tasks at inhuman speeds. Let the computer add, subtract, file, collate, search, sort, index, count, list, compare. And reserve the more human functions for the English teacher. Recall some of the successful odd couples of fact and fiction who have had little cause to unite and yet have profited by union: Bottom and Titania, Beauty and the Beast, Laurel and Hardy. Add to the list the Computer and the English Teacher who may access a technological sunset and live happily ever after.

PATRICIA MACDONALD
Palomar College

FROM NON—WRITER TO WRITER: SOME YEAS AND SOME NAYS

At a time when apathy and "burnout" are supposed to be flourishing on both sides of the inkwell, it would be rejuvenating for anyone to step into Pat McGrath's classroom and observe the way she teaches people how to write. I had a very convincing opportunity to simulate such a visit in a session at the recent ECCTYC conference in La Jolla: "The Puente Project: Transforming Non-Writers to Writers."

As soon as we were seated, we were given the assignment to make a short list of people whom we most admire. After allowing us time to compile three to six names, we were then asked to star the one we thought was the most significantly outstanding and then to go on to explain his or her achievements, beginning with one key sentence. At this point we were directed to break into groups of three to listen to each member's writing sample. The directions were specific: we were to contribute nothing negative, but tell the person what we noticed and liked about the piece or ask a question. When we had all done this for a time, we rejoined the entire group to witness some voluntary samples of striking prose. It is my guess that this last activity was a divergence from the normal classroom procedure, as it might be premature to share the undeveloped thoughts of students fresh from the small groups before they had a chance to take the comments home and work them into their essays. (It is debatable who would be more defensive about sharing embryonic ideas, inexperienced student writers or English teachers, but my recollection is that this step was done for the enhancement of the conference session and for the convenience of eliminating homework during the cocktail hour.) Normal procedure would be to send the students home with the small group suggestions and let them polish those to the best of their ability.

We were handed two student writing samples illustrating the assignment just hurriedly sketched and partially recalled, and one, if not both, indicated an incredible range of growth from the first utterance to the last draft. With certain differences in the level of execution, the two examples progressed from awkward statements to very satisfying three-part essays demonstrating a

movement from generalization-purpose through specific development to generalization-insight. It would be safe to say that conference members were impressed (read *amazed*).

As I recall the session, I am left with impressions ranging from positive to negative (this is comforting because it lends an aura of objectivity). On the positive side, I like the encouragement for the emerging writer built into the specified instructions: "No negative criticism; only questions or things I noticed and liked." This was further emphasized by Ms. McGrath's calm, quiet, sincere manner. The mention of this encouraging attitude leads directly to a discussion of what teachers hope to accomplish and actually do accomplish by making red marks on papers (a discussion I shall inelegantly avoid by moving on to another topic).

I have no doubt that this technique would help all students, but not all students equally. It seems more suited to the type of student who has writing blocks and considerable inexperience with written language. The handouts and the discussion centered around personal experiences, which form the bulk of the written work produced by the students. Aren't there some writers for whom evoking and reproducing (albeit detailed) personal experiences are redundant? Can we imagine a class of freshmen comp students ready to learn ways of recombining and extending personal experience into the classic traditional forms we read about in our textbooks? As the degree and number of students we have reaching that plateau increases, the method would not seem to be as effective, and I do not recall that point being addressed in the section meeting.

This leads me to my last reservation, which involves the leadership role of the teacher. In this method the teacher steps down from the pedestal or off the stage to become a comparatively insignificant member of one or more committees. I am not worried about my ego being able to accept this role if my ethical judgment says it is all right.

(Continued on Page 12)

POLITICAL ISSUES AND DEPARTMENTS OF ENGLISH

One of the sessions at ECCTYC's Statewide Conference reported on the political issues that community college English departments must address. The three speakers identified three major areas of concern: English as a Second Language (ESL), Student and Teacher Competency, and Academic Reforms.

ESL DECISIONS. Speaker: John Callen, City College of San Francisco.

The buzzwords these days are "matriculation," "mission statement," "CPEC," "academic floor," and "fast-track ESL." The last two most likely will cause trouble for ESL programs.

City College of San Francisco has three thousand students in a five-level program designed to bring the student up to the pre-English 1A (Subject A) level. An abbreviated form of the Michigan Test screens out beginners, who are referred to an Adult Education Center. The English Department maintains close articulation with this Center through a process of pre- and post-testing. At present all five levels carry full credit.

Administrative concern with the length of time needed for some students to go through the ESL program has prompted a request that the Department consider "fast tracking," *i.e.* ways of passing the student through more rapidly. The ESL faculty is looking into five-day-a-week classes at the higher levels (the lowest and intermediate levels already meet daily) as well as into modular scheduling. Their concern is to maintain the "credit rating" of the ESL courses and to withstand pressure to institute workload credit or, worse, to have ESL courses fall below some future academic floor.

COMPETENCIES. Speaker: Dick McIntosh, Cypress College.

Student competency became an issue in the nineteen-seventies. The Hart Bill mandates testing for California

students in grades K through 12. It also provides for a proficiency test in lieu of high school graduation. However, no statewide standard exists, and there is a question whether the test does or should measure academic skills or life-coping ones. Many educators wonder if teachers are teaching to the test rather than teaching a body of knowledge and skills.

Teacher competency is also an issue. Those now entering the profession graduate at the bottom of their graduating classes. A 1961 National Education Association survey of college seniors reported that half named teaching as their career goal; by 1981 only 21 per cent intended to become teachers. The Educational Testing Service has entered the area of teacher-competency testing. As part of a comprehensive strategy to increase the quality of teachers, colleges have stiffened their entrance requirements to include four years of English and three years of mathematics and science.

The Chancellor's Task Force on Academic Quality is concerned with matriculation and remediation because these have to do with funding, and funding, in turn, is being given to programs that have measurable outcomes.

Inevitably, the last component of competency will be *exit testing*. The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) has identified the crux of the problem: the hope is to preserve local autonomy, but the need is for accountability. Even the Learning-Assessment-Retention Consortium (LARC) has been addressing this issue. Unfortunately, LARC deals with matters that involve English departments but does not include many English faculty in its determinations.

ACADEMIC SENATE OF CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES. Speaker: Edith Conn, Ventura College.

Highly significant issues are now before the Senate and will come up in the near future. Faculty need to be involved with the local college senates and to make sure that information from the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges (ASCCC) is posted and made known to all faculty members.

The CPEC report *Promises to Keep* presents a particular view of upgrading academic quality as well as of matters of funding. This report, along with the Title V mandate regarding the ASCCC, has caused the Senate to become an active participant in issues of academic reform. Some recent actions by the ASCCC include changes in grading policy (no W after the fourteenth week), graduation competencies in reading and writing, and new criteria to identify those courses given for credit and those that are avocational.

The ASCCC is currently considering the following matters:

(1) Academic Floor: If appropriate at all, this should be identified after more data are available on remediation and placement programs. The issue has been deferred in favor of verified student progress and competency evaluation through assessment.

(2) AA Degree: Courses leading to an AA degree should be postsecondary, but they may include elementary algebra and one course at at level immediately below English 1A. All courses applicable to this degree should include evaluation and a considerable amount of reading and writing. A standardized system of course numbering should be devised to match those of the University of California and California State University systems.

(3) Remediation: The ASCCC reaffirms that one of the missions of the community college is remediation.

(4) Matriculation: The Chancellor's Task Force on Academic Quality is studying matriculation as implemented at sixteen community colleges and will draw up a student matriculation model to present to the Legislature in early 1984.

(5) TV Course Standards: The ASCCC is investigating telecommunications courses, specifically to determine standards.

The Big Legislative Push centers around reforms involving teachers. Already funding for K through 12 is tied to teacher competency tests. Other proposed teacher reforms are as

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BURNOUT: WHY IT HAPPENS AND HOW TO CURE IT

Burnout is both a professional and personal issue. The speakers at the recent workshop focussed on an understanding of what burnout is and what we can do about it—personally. They paid less attention to the role of institutions in assisting in its prevention or identification.

Jean Weber and Susan Obler presented a solid workshop on the topic, offering both theoretical and practical views on the subject. Susan Obler of Rio Hondo College and a graduate student at the University of Texas in staff development, provided a review of the major literature in this field. Citing Chris Arygris, she pointed out that the foundation for burnout may lie in the conflict generated by the different expectations held by the organization and the individual in a particular job. Ambiguity about performance and function needs to be replaced by concrete feedback resulting in improved awareness of our function in the institution.

Ms. Obler continued the argument for clear expectations by pointing out Martin Buber's idea of the need for confirmation. He suggests that the need to know "how well am I doing" is strong; as well, each of us needs to be in a position where growth and self-actualization are promoted. Added to these ideas is that of Erving Goffman: faced with ambiguity and conflict, people begin to experience situational withdrawal, *i.e.*, fantasies about what it would be like to be someplace else doing something else. Thus, burnout.

Faced with a sense of depersonalization, emotional stress, lowered self-esteem, withdrawal—and, ultimately, a feeling of lack of control over our own lives—what can be done? These intensely personal reactions were addressed by Jean Weber, instructor and staff development officer at Cerritos College. As Ms. Weber suggested, because it is inappropriate to take our personal sense of depression into the classroom, we are obligated professionally as well as personally to address these problems as they occur. She suggested that the essence of our response needs to be attention to integration, not specialization; that is, we can seek breadth in our lives, look to other fields, and pursue other interests. "Stay interested and interesting," says Ms. Weber.

The seminar was a good beginning to raise our personal consciousness about stress and its management. The concept which both Ms. Obler and Ms. Weber stressed was the need to work with our colleagues to trust, to share feelings, to support one another—in order to promote change in ourselves.

Questions raised which need further attention included the role institutions play in preventing burnout or addressing it when it occurs, the degree to which burnout is a function of our jobs in the education system or the society in which we live, the ways in which we can assist those suffering from burnout to acknowledge and address the problems.

In addition to the substance of the

presentation, the workshop leaders provided a good bibliography and support articles from various journals. One article of particular interest was "Burning and Burnout" (*English Journal*, April 1981) in which the author, Jane Christensen, develops an interesting metaphor related to fire and burnout. Further reading: Paine, *Job Stress and Burnout*; Maslat, *Burnout: The Cost of Caring*.

JANET S. PORTOLAN
Fullerton College

REviews

"REviews" features discussions of books and media programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 100 to 500 words and should evaluate the book's or program's effective use in a classroom, in a learning resource center, by an individual student, or by the instructor. Include with the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

CLUSTER TO EXCELLENCE

By MARIAN OLSON
Antelope Valley College

If your freshman composition classes turn out students who enjoy writing and can write measureably better at the end of the semester than at the beginning, then Gabriele Lusser Rico's *Writing the Natural Way* won't interest you. But if you dread facing another class with students who loathe writing because they cannot think of anything to say, and when they do, their papers are so dull you're nodding by the third sentence, then Rico's *Writing the Natural Way* is a book you must read.

The book grew out of her unsatisfactory experiences as a writing teacher, her accidental stumbling across "an article by Dr. Joseph Bogen on hemispheric specialization and creativity," and her discovery of clustering, a technique used to tap the creative powers of the right side of the brain.

Armed with a formidable log of scientific findings, faith, and excitement, Rico revamped her composition courses. Her hunch and work paid off, as she witnessed improvements beyond her expectations. For the first time, her students were writing excellent papers, and they were doing it using her innovative methods.

Rico dismisses the idea of a "born writer," saying, "the innate human need that underlies all writing. . . is a gift we all possess from earliest childhood" (p. 15). She says, "If you can speak, form letters on the page, know the rudiments of sentence structure, take a telephone message, or write a thank-you note, you have sufficient language skills to learn to write the natural way" (p. 15).

Unfortunately, most of us lose this gift under the "weight of rules and prescriptions" (p. 16). And the loss begins in school when the "process of writing is taught to us in fragments: mechanics, grammar, and vocabulary" (p. 16).

But natural writing "does not depend on literary terminology and grammatical classifications. . . . Natural writing depends on gaining access to a part of your mind we do not normally associate with writing skills" (p. 16).

Clustering, the key to natural writing, works in several ways. It stops writer's block, because it "undercuts tension, anxiety, and resistance" (p. 35). It opens an overall design. It gets more for less—a principle of good writing. It develops images, rhythms, patterns, creative tensions. It creates whole vignettes, the building blocks that make up longer papers. And, surprise of surprises, clustering leads to "a significant drop in errors of punctuation, awkward phrasing, even spelling" (p. 11).

In a pleasing format that is easy to follow Gabriele Rico's *Writing the Natural Way* takes your through the process of writing naturally. Her book has copious illustrations, easy explanations, a wealth of exercises to reinforce each principle of good writing, and an extensive bibliography.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Issues of Current Concern

As I write this column in mid-January, the Sacramento deadlock on community college financing seems close to resolution. Speaker Brown is allowing consideration of tuition/fees, and according to his spokesman, the Governor is willing to entertain some compromise on attendant issues. By the time this article is printed, I assume that our financing, at least for the current year, will be settled. However, the overwhelming damage to morale will not be so easily remedied. All the instructors who received notices or who worried about receiving them will take little comfort in a temporary reprieve. Part-time staff who were given no spring schedule until funding came through will not easily forget how quickly they become dispensible. Departments will have to work hard to restore some fragile semblance of the morale they once enjoyed.

A second matter of definite concern to all English departments is the change in English 1A-1B that several University of California (UC) campuses are contemplating. The Irvine, Los Angeles, and Berkeley campuses have increased the word requirement in either or both courses to eight to ten thousand *original* words, no rewrites. This has been done in all instances as an "internal matter," avoiding all normal, acceptable procedures of articulation, including bypassing the Articulation Council of California. This is bound to work hardship on all institutions that transfer students to these campuses. Furthermore, the Berkeley campus is increasing the semester unit value of both courses to four units. Though campus representatives give verbal assurance that three-unit courses from transfer institutions will be acceptable, the potential for future crises is certainly present.

A third major issue is the Legislature's current interest in community college matriculation and assessment procedures. Now that they control our funding, legislators are increasingly interested in establishing identifiable standards for all community colleges. Of special interest to

English departments is the current discussion to establish a statewide English placement examination, modeled after the English Placement Test used by the California State University and Colleges (CSUC) system. English departments and professional organizations will want to closely monitor this issue to ensure that we have major input into the legislation, the possible development of a statewide evaluation instrument, and the ultimate administration of the instrument. This is certainly a process that we do not want to leave either in the hands of the Learning-Assessment-Retention Consortium or of the California Postsecondary Education Commission. English instructors must be the final authority in these matters.

Finally, there is the issue of our "stepchild status" with the Legislature and with the Governor. Though on paper we are an integral and necessary part of the system of higher education in California, our funding and our treatment are in no way proportional to the other segments. We lag miles behind the CSUC system and light years behind UC. No matter what we do locally to restore morale, until our professionalism and our worth gain statewide respect, our efforts will be in vain.

Granted, there are other pressing issues confronting us this year, but these four seem the most fundamental and, therefore, the most crucial. Any positive impact we can have in these areas will be felt by everyone.

JIM CAGNACCI
City College of San Francisco

Students, Tuition, and the Community Colleges

——SACRAMENTO SCENE——

By GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

The legislators returned to Sacramento and started their new legislative year on 3 January 1984. Governor Deukmejian presented his budget on 10 January. The squabbling over the money for the community colleges (CC's) seemed to have abated at first, and the atmosphere seemed rather conciliatory. Then things began to get tense again, and the outcome looked

chancy. The conciliating, the maneuvering and bargaining, the mediating and negotiating went on and off and up and down until the 26 January when the whole show ended: the legislature got the basic money back into the CC's budget for the current year; the Governor got his fees, which the students will have to pay beginning in August 1984.

The proposals and the counter proposals were legion (at least there were a whole bunch of them) and included every possible variation on the main theme. People's reactions ranged from outright "no" to "well, maybe." When the contending parties had finished their wrangling, when they had taken their votes, when they had signed their documents, their results differed little from what they had argued over and disagreed with during the preceding six months. In order for these bills to take effect immediately, the legislature would have had to pass them by a majority of two-thirds; or the Governor would have had to call a special session. He called a special session that ran concurrently with the regular one. The bills could then pass by a simple majority, which everyone was sure existed, and those who would have had to violate their conscience or their political constituency could still vote against them. The colleges would get their money immediately and the students their fees in the fall.

The first of two bills built into the compromise, and passed on 19 January, restores the $96.5 million, which the Governor had cut, to this year's budget. (The difference between this amount and last year's $108.5 million was made up by an increase in the revenue over what had been anticipated from property taxes.) The second bill, passed on 25 January, established the fees and set up a number of related provisions:

— the $50 fee for full-time students (taking six or more units);

— $5 per unit for part-time students (taking six or fewer units);

— a consolidation of some ten existing, miscellaneous fees for such things as instructional materials, health services, field trips, some insurances, materials fees, late applications;

— an exemption for people who receive welfare;

— $15 million for financial aid;

— a limit on parking fees to the actual cost of providing the space;

— a moratorium for three and one-half years on raising the fee;

— a sunset clause: the fees would expire, also in three and one-half years.

In all, the CC's will get for this year what they would have gotten. For next year, they will get about $1.09 billion, an increase of around 9 per cent. The new budget also provides that the California State Universities will get 21.2 per cent more ($1.15 billion); the University of California, 30.2 per cent ($1.4 billion); and both institutions, a slight reduction in the students' fees. The K-12 system will get $11.9 billion, up 8.4 per cent. In the proposed budget, all the schools together will receive 53 per cent of the general fund. The Governor is also proposing a constitutional amendment to change Proposition 13 so that local cities, counties, and special districts could finance construction projects with general obligation bonds if they were approved by a two-thirds' majority of the voters.

The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) conducted a study from which it concluded that students at the CC's are not the poor, nor the minorities, nor those on welfare who are trying to get into the working force that we all thought they were. The CC student is typically a white woman who is self-supporting and earning around $28,000 per year, going to school part-time either to do something that interests her or to improve her background or to be able to change jobs. The typical full-time student comes from a family that earns $23,000 per year; 13.7 per cent of the 1.3 million students come from families that earn $48,000 or more; 11.2 per cent are from families that earn $12,000 or less. About 30 per cent have college degrees and nearly 70 per cent support themselves. CPEC and others have concluded that most of the students can and should pay some fee and that some kind of financial aid can take care of the one in twenty (5 per cent) who can't. Needless to say, these statistics—and there are many more than those that I

have mentioned—have upset a number of people. These people have, however, fallen back on the usual defense in cases of this kind and have said that the study is badly flawed, badly done. Yet they have offered no information to counter CPEC's study. Perhaps they will later. Prevailing wisdom indicates,

(Continued on Page 12)

SACRAMENTO SCENE

(Continued from Page 11)

as well, that if the issue of fees were put to the voters they would approve them by a large majority.

With the one essential question of money for the CC's resolved for a little while, others remain that need attention (so what else is new?), some would say desperately: What are the community colleges for? Who should they serve? The Board of Governors (BG) and the Chancellor, at their meeting in January, asked the powers that be (the Governor and the Legislature)

to review the Master Plan for Higher Education written in 1969, which defines what is called the CC's mission. The BG supports moves to reassess the CC's mission, the way they are funded, the way they are governed, their accountability, their ability to renew themselves. It and other CC organizations want to get away from the piecemeal methods of operating of the past and to set priorities. The Board says that the priorities for 1984 should be vocational education and transfer education.

The Academic Senate of the California CC's, at its Fall meeting in Los Angeles, passed its usual round of resolutions on Academic Rigor, formerly known as Academic Standards, (in favor); on matriculation (needs to be studied); on associate degree course (local faculties should determine if they are of "appropriate academic rigor" and certain sections of Title 5 should be amended to define in some terms that determine when a course "conforms to standards of academic rigor"); on science courses (certain minimum ones should be required); on remediation (it continues to be the responsibility of the CC's); and on the definition of remediation proposed by the Chancellor's Task Force on Academic Quality (to accept). A number of resolutions grew out of a discussion by Assemblyman Richard Katz (D., Sepulveda) on his bill "preprint AB 1," a designation that indicates that it is in the process of being written. It will deal mainly with vocational education: who should direct it and who should approve courses. It suggests that some kind of industrial or business council do these things. This bill may have implications that extend beyond vocational education, and we should probably watch it. The Academic Senate also moved to adopt a position paper on managing the Planning and Review process (apparently a euphemism for reducing programs and the numbers of courses). Local senates have copies of all the resolutions that were dealt with.

As the new season, the new year begins, many people are presenting many ideas. Most are in some stage too preliminary to make any judgments about. There are the usual proposals on tenure, nothing of substance on programs or standards. Various people are proposing new ideas every day, and many of those are revisions of old ideas. I shall try to keep up with these and keep our readers informed. For the present, the studies and projects coming out of the agencies should probably get more of our attention than the legislature should.

MAGIC JOHNSON: THE FINALS, N.B.A.

MAGIC JOHNSON:
THE FINALS, N.B.A.

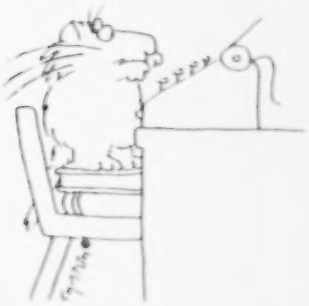
He floors us all, such moves, blends pause and whir.
He slips a guard, pops up like soap, and hits.
He's phantom-smooth, omnipresent, sets blurs
Around opponents and by, and then his lift.
He lobs an assist, backpedals, then on he comes.
And rebound-high again; how straight he steers.
At six-feet plus, he's suddenly ten, and then some.
Rarefied, he cops his spot, in cheers.

His fling's with iron now, come-hither net.
He's at the rim, puts by the slammed-shut hours
That locked out all but will, and grit and sweat;
His moment holds, deadset as any power,
Big mastery adding shine, old drawbacks rent,
The skills that urged him there come up to flower.

BILL BURNS
Rio Hondo College

EDITOR'S NOTE

(Continued from Page 4)



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I now look forward to receiving articles, letters, reviews, and regional news from many of you who have not submitted manuscripts previously and from those of you who have written for us in the past. Let us work together to make *inside english* a journal that reflects the ideas and concerns of all English teachers in California's community colleges.

NONWRITER/WRITER

(Continued from Page 8)

But if becoming a member of the committees means negating or suppressing years of experience and education, then we may be involving ourselves in a downward spiral. In short, while I am anxious to reduce the level of combative student-teacher anxiety in the classroom, I am not sure that doing so would cause the students to grow to their highest potential. Would removing the leader cause improvement in writing beyond an early stage, or would it produce stagnation?

LEE LEONARD
Shasta College

POLITICAL ISSUES

(Continued from Page 9)

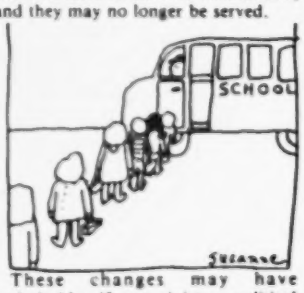
as follows:

(1) The Life Credential would be renewable every five years.
(2) The dismissal notice date would be 15 August rather than 15 March.
(3) Teachers would be required to take courses as a result of their evaluations.
(4) Administrators should be evaluated. (This is an ASCCC position.)
(5) A statewide salary schedule may be in effect within three to five years. Its effect would be to make local boards obsolete and to bring about changes in collective bargaining.
(6) Periodic teacher-competency testing for community college instructors is also being discussed. (This, like most of the other provisions, would be grandfathered.)

Finally, the Task Force proposed that certain remedial courses should be counted as part of an instructor's load but not towards the AA degree. Faculty and administrators fear that such courses may not be funded at the same level as degree courses.

However, one bright note does emerge from all these proceedings: SB1204 authorizes the Governor to appoint, from a list approved by the ASCCC, a tenured community college faculty member to sit as one of the fifteen members of the Community College Board of Governors.

The community college's open door is beginning to close, and the overall implications of these developments are serious. Attempts to improve academic quality are praiseworthy, of course, and overdue. On the other hand, the Legislature, in its zeal to outmaneuver the Governor, will require such drastic changes in the offerings and the accessibility of community colleges in return for funding that the system will never be the same. If an academic floor is introduced, then we can say goodbye to ESL programs and, most likely, to any remediation below the pre-English 1A level. If the concept of workload credit takes hold, then there is a strong possibility that the courses so identified will be funded at a lower rate. In this event, they will probably be taught by per-session instructors, perhaps brought in by agencies comparable to those that provide nurses and secretaries on demand. Entering transfer students would (and should) be better prepared, but higher standards for college entrance could well lead to greater competition between four-year and two-year colleges for a dwindling number of qualified students. Vocational programs will probably continue to be strong. But large numbers of minority students with limited English skills have traditionally used the community college to boost themselves into the mainstream, and they may no longer be served.



These changes may have undesirable, if not sinister, political implications. The highest levels of state government have been heard to mutter that the community colleges are trying to educate too many people. Are we hearing a clearly elitist note to ring in the year of 1984? Orwell knew.

ROSANNE HILLHOUSE
Imperial Valley College

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO YEAR COLLEGES ECCTYC

inside english

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INSIDE *inside english*

ECCTYC Looks At

Writing Across the Curriculum

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An interdisplinary program like the HELP model at Sacramento City College benefits developmental students. page 4

A philosophy instructor presents a writing-across-the-curriculum model that addresses the needs of motivated students. page 8

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WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM Raising Student Literacy *AND* Faculty Morale

By
SUSAN H. McLEOD
San Diego State University

Fred Fischer is certainly right when he says that for those of us who care about the problem of student literacy, caring is not enough—we must take action. We have taken such action here at San Diego State University by developing a Writing Across the Curriculum program, the core of which is an interdisciplinary faculty seminar. For anyone interested in developing something similar to it, I would like to explain how the program came about, describe it briefly, and then comment on why it has been successful.

In Spring 1981 our academic vice-president spoke to the faculty senate about the most important problems facing the university. In that address, he said that one of the most crucial problems, not only in terms of the students, but also in terms of low faculty morale, was the problem of declining student literacy. He asked the university community to respond with possible solutions, and response was immediate. Faculty actually volunteered to form *ad hoc* committees which would study the problem, and out of these committees came recommendations for curricular change (more writing classes at all levels) and change within existing lasses (more writing assignments ir all disciplines). The committees r: :ognized that while curricular cha ge was relatively easy, changing aculty behavior in the classroom was not, especially because increasi g class sizes and frozen salaries had in recent years made many of our faculty feel over-burdened, even martyred. The committees, therefore, recommended setting up faculty support systems. When the opportunity (via a grant from the Chancellor's Office) came to set up one such system in the form of a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program, I plunged in.

While planning the program, I talked to as many directors of existing WAC programs as I could, to get their advice and to benefit from their expertise. I spoke (in person or by phone) to Toby Fulwiler of Michigan Tech., Elaine Maimon of Beaver College (PA), and Chris Thaiss of George Mason University (VA); all of these good people helped me conceptualize the program here. I also read everything I could find on Writing Across the Curriculum and on the psychology of groups, the latter references being every bit as useful as the former. My grant stipulated that I should use an already successful CSU program as my model, and I chose Andy Moss and Carol Holder's program at Cal Poly, Pomona. Carol was extremely generous with her time, advice, and materials; my program would not have been possible without her help.

The design of the program here is similar to the design of Carol's program, with some modification for our campus. Selected faculty attend an intensive summer seminar and a one-day follow-up session. The seminar has two objectives—to review current theory in the teaching of writing, especially writing as a way of learning, and to

practice ways of applying that theory in designing student writing assignments and evaluating student writing within the participants' own disciplines. I felt that two things were crucial to the design of the seminar if the program were to be a success.

1. The seminar had to be a professional enrichment program, much like those in the business sector—it should not be remedial in nature, but should be aimed at attracting the best teachers, the campus leaders, the agents of change. I worked closely with the administration on ways to make faculty understand that being chosen to participate was an honor. The vice-president for academic affairs, who is widely respected on the campus, demonstrated his support for the program by appearing at the opening session and welcoming participants. Those chosen also had their names published in the faculty newsletter as honorees, and they were paid two hundred dollars each for their participation. The honorarium was very important, even though it was only a token amount; it told the participants that their interest in an experimental program was valued, and it gave the program some status in the eyes of the university community. One participant told me that the other members of her department were not at all impressed by the fact that she had been chosen for the program until they saw in the faculty weekly newsletter that she had received an honorarium. Money talks in interesting ways.

2. In order to convince teachers that they should assign more student writing in their classes, I felt it was crucial to show them that first of all their students learn more from writing about a subject than they do from taking a true-false test on it, and secondly that teachers need not increase their paper load by assigning more writing. I first advertised the seminar in exactly this way ("Do you want to help your students learn more material in your classes better than they do now? Would you like to know more effective ways to assign and evaluate student writing without increasing your paper load?"), and had an overwhelmingly large number of applicants from which to chose the participants. Seminar participants read Janet Emig's article "Writing as a Mode of Learning," which states a thesis that they agreed with immediately: writing is a tool of learning as well as a test of what has been learned. With that as a given, we discussed and demonstrated methods of using writing as a mode of learning: student journals (or learning logs), written reactions to discussions, summaries of lectures (written at the end of the class or at the beginning of the next class), summaries of or reactions to the readings, comments on one another's written texts—all of them methods

(Continued on Page 7)

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Letters

Dear Editor

UPDATE ON "CRITICAL THINKING"

My thanks . . . for your fine editing and layout of my article ("Critical Thinking: Defining the Critter and Staking out Its Territory," March 1984, p.1) . . . . The only item I regret is the placing of parentheses around "the necessary components of clear definitions" after the word *analogies*, which was certainly not something I intended to say. . . .

Incidentally, I have recently signed a contract with Wadsworth Publishing for my book. It needs another revision and should be out by the fall of 1985. We are very much interested in knowing more about what English teachers want and need in critical thinking that a textbook can assist them with.

Again, thanks again for your interest and support. I found it very hard to be on the student end of having my papers edited and criticized, but it was very good for my ego and necessary for my learning.

Marlys Mayfield
College of Alameda

Ms. Mayfield requests that responses to her article and to this letter be sent to her at the College of Alameda, 555 Atlantic Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501.

JC NAME CHANGE: "REMEDIAL HIGH SCHOOL"

The following letter appeared in the Los Angeles Times, *22 March 1984. It and the responses to it are reprinted with the kind permission of the* Los Angeles Times.

As a professor in the California State University system since 1967, I say that a rigorous examination of California's junior college system is long overdue. Every semester my colleagues and I must counsel numerous newly transferred products of that system who are bewildered by two facts: (1) they did "good work" at a local junior college but (2) they have been unable to do passing work at the state university level.

The persistent delusion of such unfortunate students that they are capable college students is a barrier to the remedial work they need to function successfully at the college level. Therefore, until the sources of the problem can be pinpointed and corrected, I suggest that the Legislature enact a name change from "Junior College" to "Remedial High School" to eliminate the pretense that such education approaches college level work.

JIM McMARTIN
Camarillo

The following responses to Mr. McMartin's letter appeared in the 8 April issue of the Times.

I am angered by the snide attack on community colleges by McMartin. His arrogance is only exceeded by his misinformation. He is guilty of the fallacy of faulty generalization when he draws the conclusion that community college transfer students to the California State universities are poorly prepared, based merely on his limited and prejudicial perception.

The facts contradict McMartin's conclusion. Studies have shown that community college transfers are not handicapped; indeed, they achieve a slightly higher level than their CSU counterparts.

We in the community colleges want to do everything possible to improve the quality of our institutions; for instance, I recently appointed a task force at Cypress College to evaluate carefully our transfer program. But prejudicial and ill-informed attacks such as the one by McMartin do nothing to improve the situation. Rather it is the age-old tactic of attempting to look superior by belittling one's colleagues.

JACK SCOTT
President, Cypress College

I was amazed to read the letter from Jim McMartin (March 24), "Proposal to Change Name of State's Junior Colleges." How can someone be a professor at the California State University and not know that the two-year colleges of the state dropped the title "junior colleges" many years ago? Legislation passed at least as early as 1967 designated the two-year colleges as the California community colleges.

But even more distressing was McMartin's contention that community college transfer students were dragging down the standards of the CSU institutions. I just received a report from the CSU chancellor's office that provides the statistical information about this matter.

For example, at California State University Northridge, the grade point average of community college transfers, earned at the university in the fall of 1983, was 2.63, while students who began their college work at the university earned 2.62 for that semester. At all campuses of CSU, the average for community transfers was 2.70 while the other students earned a grade-point average of 2.66. In both cases, the community college students were earning higher grades than the students who attended the state universities for their freshman and sophomore years!

Either McMartin and the other instructors in the CSU system are doing a very good job of remediation, or else the community college transfer students are going to the CSU campuses at least as well prepared as the students who started out there.

LOWELL J. ERICKSON
President
Los Angeles Mission College

I wonder if McMartin has considered the general trend toward illiteracy and aliteracy at every level of our population? As a community college professor, I am as chagrined as he is at the situation, and it is small consolation to know that there is only an imperceptible difference in the scores of community college transfers and students who began as freshman at CSUN when both groups take the mandatory proficiency examination in English at the beginning of the junior year of college.

The point is that remedial training might be made unnecessary at every institution in the educational system by eliminating the problem before it has become one. Parents might refuse to allow their children to spend more time in front of the television set than they spend in the classrooms during the first 12 years in school. But then parents themselves might also read rather than watch the boob tube.

EDYTHE M. McGOVERN
Los Angeles Valley College

I take exception to McMartin's blanket indictment of the supposed failure of all community colleges in preparing students for his academic standards.

As a 22-year veteran of secondary teaching (eight years in high school and the past 14 as a community college instructor), I have long observed that there is a tendency for educators to place responsibility for their students'

(Continued on Page 12)

ROGER GARRISON

With deep regret we note the death of Roger Garrison on 1 March 1984. Roger died following an operation to alleviate complications resulting from heart surgery. Roger profoundly influenced the way teachers teach writing through his courses for teachers at Westbrook College in Portland, Maine, and through his workshops at various conventions and as guest lecturer at various colleges. His "conference method" of teaching compostion revitalized the classes of many instructors and led to the well-received textbook *One-to-One* by Charles Dawe and Ed Dornan of Orange Coast College.

A letter from Thomas B. Courtice, President of Westbrook College, announces the establishment of the Roger H. Garrison Faculty Development Award at Westbrook, "an endowed annual award to help faculty become better teachers." Anyone wishing to honor Roger's memory by contributing to this endowment may write to Dr. Courtice at Westbrook College, Stevens Avenue, Portland, Maine, 04103.

TEACHING TEACHERS
Resistance and Writing Across the Curriculum

By JUDITH R. HERT
San Bernardino Valley College

A major article on writing across the curriculum appears in the February 1984 issue of *College English*. In "How Well Does Writing Across the Curriculum Work?" Toby Fulwiler presents a frank discussion of a six-year program he directed at Michigan Tech, and gives a largely positive answer—except for the persistent, nagging problem of some faculty resistance. What makes the article useful is that the program described seems typical of the best of such programs and that the candid admission of faculty resistance pinpoints the central problem in any such program: gaining faculty cooperation. Clearly, there is now a large, useful body of knowledge to serve as the basis for programs in cross-discipline writing; but there is not yet any clear strategy for engaging teachers in making use of this knowledge and thereby making writing an important part of their teaching.

What is interesting to me is that writing-across-the-curriculum programs barely address the question of faculty motivation. Most rely on money, altruism, coercion, or some combination of all of these to motivate faculty. Once enrolled, some teachers become more committed as they invest time and thought, but others become frustrated and lose interest. The number who become resistant is partly, but not entirely, related to the number coerced. But relying solely on volunteers to build a program is itself limiting.

Given the problem of faculty motivation, it is interesting that almost no programs seek to make a connection between the need to attract and hold teachers and the pedagogy and content of the program itself. This is true of the Michigan program. Instead, cross-discipline writing workshops are planned for teachers the way any course is planned for "regular" students: a mix of presentations, assignments, and activities designed by the instructor(s) to increase the students' knowledge and skill. The Michigan program, for example, included concepts by James Britton, ideas about writing as a way of learning, exercises in journal keeping, and strategies for prewriting, rewriting, sharing of drafts, etc.—all of which reflect the latest and best theory and practice in teaching writing.

This approach works well for teaching students, who more or less accept the subservient student role and whose motivation is strengthened by a sensitivity to grades, units, and degrees. But for teachers the classroom situation, however adroitly conducted, is often an anathema. This is what makes most staff development programs, including those in cross-discipline writing, less successful than they should be: the teachers don't want to be taught.

However, it is *not* that teachers do not want to learn at all, are uninterested in new ideas, or have no desire to improve their teaching. It is rather that many or most teachers insist on remaining in control of what they are doing. It may be something about the profession itself—what draws us to it or what its practice *does* to us—but teachers as a group do not make easy, docile students. Put negatively, we are neurotically competitive to be the ones in charge, explain the real truth, have the last word.

Put positively, we are independent, inner-directed people who must arrive at ideas for ourselves and who need to create our own processes and solutions. Thus, programs for teachers should not be run like traditional classes with the goals, activities, and content set by a director acting as an instructor.

In fact, it may be that *anyone* if given a choice prefers to be in charge of her own learning, at least, when she knows what she wants or needs to learn. (This is probably true of many of our students and it is sad we so often ignore this need.) And, whatever the initial motivation, the best kind of learning is ultimately an individual search via a series of questions and answers in the quest of some necessary goal. And if the motivation for such a process is intrinsic (as it usually will be for teachers who already hold degrees), then it must begin with identification of a genuine need or question. This will not be a question teachers *should* ask (*e.g.* How can I help improve my students' writing skills?), but a question in some form that they are already asking (*e.g.* Why is my teaching frustrating?).

There is another reason, beyond the psychology of learning, why programs for teachers should put the teachers themselves in charge of their own growth, and that is the very nature of teaching. Teaching is an art, not a body of knowledge. It is, in part, an expression of an individual character and personality. It is discovered and created. For ideas, information, and even experiences to be useful in rejuvenating a teacher, she must discover and use them for herself. When teachers get together and each seems to want to talk mainly about his or her own classes, it is not that they are egotistical (though some are) but that each is deeply involved in the complex, unique struggle of perfecting her own craft as her limitations, needs, and talents direct her.

All of this does not mean that programs in cross-discipline writing are impossible, only that they must be designed and run to serve teachers. If administrators or groups of teachers committed to improving teaching want to affect a whole faculty, they had better create a program that seeks obviously to make teaching more satisfying, interesting, rewarding, or even easier—preferably all four. Since teachers and students often share each other's successes and failures, helping teachers is often the best way to help students.

In the case of cross-discipline writing programs specifically there are some things one should avoid and others one should include if a program is to have strong faculty support and appeal. To be avoided is any suggestion that writing skills are low because non-English teachers don't require writing, that nobody but English teachers know how to write, that English teachers work harder than anybody else, that other teachers should correct more papers. All of these may be true, but they are divisive issues and will lead nowhere. They should not be discussed; they should never be raised.

What should be asked honestly and openly is "How do weak student writing skills affect or limit the teaching and learning in your classes?" Though the question is to some extent loaded—the assumption being that weak skills have *some* effect—if it is asked sincerely, it is surprising the extent to which teachers will take responsibility for the student writing problem. In fact, they will often describe it more effectively than can many English teachers because they see writing not only as a skill but as the chief form of thinking and knowing in their discipline. I have heard teachers from such unlikely areas as math, chemistry, and welding link weak

(*Continued on Page 9*)

CALL FOR PAPERS

The October issue of *inside english* will feature articles on "The Computer and/in the English Class." Appropriate topics include computer-assisted composition, word-processing and compostion, the use of the computer in editing, computer software programs for literature. Short articles might evaluate a single aspect of computer use or demonstrate the application of the computer to a specific composition problem or literature question. Longer articles might investigate some more complex applications of the computer or grapple with some philosophical issues.

The deadline for submissions for the October issue is 25 August.

The December issue will feature articles on "Literature and the English Program at the Community College." Writers might address several issues: the place of literature in the community college English curriculum; what should be taught in a given literature course (the writer focusing on a course that is of special interest or on a typical survey course in American literature); ways to build student interest in literature classes; ways to teach literature classes more successfully. Short articles might present a particular technique for teaching a particular book, poem, story, or concept. Reviews might evaluate literature texts or books to increase one's understanding of some aspect of literature.

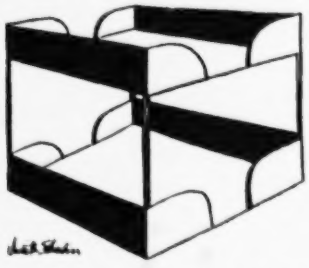
The deadline for the December issue is 1 October.

All manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate and should follow the established style (see the March 1984 issue or send for an *inside english* Style Sheet.)

"IT'S NOT MY JOB" A Cross-Discipline Solution to Basic Skills Development

By BARBARA DAVIS
and LINDA LUVAAS-BRIGGS
Sacramento City College

So often we hear from our colleagues in other disciplines the refrain, "It's not my job to teach students how to read and write! They should be able to do those basic skills well *before* they get to my class." These statements reflect many instructors' frustration with the increasingly large numbers of students who enter the classroom unprepared to deal competently with the reading and writing assignments required. What can community college instructors do to help students become



better prepared and to help alleviate their colleagues, frustrations?

STUDENT SCORES AND FACULTY PERCEPTIONS

We set out first to find out about our students. An active assessment program at Sacramento City College, an inner city college of approximately 15,500 students, revealed that in the Fall 1982 semester 60.1 per cent of the students assessed (55.9 per cent of the total student body) read at or below the thirteenth grade level as measured by the Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK). Of the students tested, 10.9 per cent read below the seventh grade level. Sacramento City defines a score of below the thirteenth grade level on the TASK test as "below college level," or at the developmental skill level. Traditionally students who score below this level at Sacramento City (and at many other community colleges) are offered remedial and developmental reading courses for skill improvement. Study of the Assessment Center data revealed, however, that a large discrepancy exists between the number of students eligible for reading classes and those who actually enrolled. Of the 1577 students eligible to enroll in the Fall 1982 semester, only 254 actually did. What happens at Sac City to the other 1323 students? Where do they go?

Most likely, they enroll in classes at the college that do not require assessment scores as prerequisites for entry; they become the students who are frustrating our colleagues. A study of the reading scores of the assessed students in classes *not* requiring assessment supports this conclusion. The mean grade-equivalent score of these students in fourteen classes was the tenth grade level in geography, health education, seven different history courses, political science, psychology, and sociology; and the eleventh grade level in biology and chemistry. A readability study in 1981 of textbooks used at Sac City demonstrated that the readability level of 60 per cent of these texts was twelfth grade and above, even though 49.7 per cent of the assessed students read at or below the twelfth grade level. Although readability studies and standardized tests do not measure identical abilities, such studies and tests do raise the question, "Is student performance affected by the use of textbooks of a readability level higher than the student's measured reading performance?"

We have found no clear answer to this question. However, the reading scores for successful students in content classes at Sac City suggests a pattern of positive correlation between reading scores and grades received in the class.

	A	B	C	D
Humanities	62.0	59.7	60.0	49.5[1]
	13th	12th	13th	10th[2]
Technology 60	66.3	61.0	54.0	50.0
	13th	13th	11th	10th
Family and Consumer Science	64.1	57.7	49.4	49.2
	13th	12th	10th	10th

[1](raw score) [2](grade equivalent score)

These scores do not indicate that a student with a tenth grade score cannot achieve an A in one of the classes. What they do reveal is the general tendency or pattern of students with lower reading scores to be less successful than students with higher scores, to be, perhaps, less able to do the work necessary to succeed in the class.

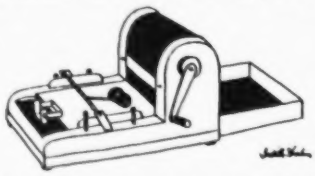
We then circulated a questionnaire

to the entire social science faculty to determine if faculty also perceived this pattern. Questions such as "What is the biggest frustration (learning/thinking) that you experience with your students?" and "What would help you most in providing for the lack of student skills?" generated long, thoughtful answers from the 90 per cent of the faculty who responded. Of the respondents, over 85 per cent indicated that their students experienced difficulty in understanding the course reading material and in writing responses to questions asked on exams and in class. Most instructors also expressed their inexperience in and discomfort with teaching reading, writing, and study skills in their own classes. As they said, "It's not my job!"

THE HELP PROGRAM

In response to the academic need made evident by the analysis of student reading scores and the faculty perceptions of student skill difficulties, Sacramento City College developed a program that integrates skills and content instruction. Using a team-teaching effort, the HELP (Higher Education Learning Package) seeks to improve students' basic skills and personal development through an interdisciplinary approach.

The HELP model involves three instructors in three separate courses—a content course (in this case, sociology), a developmental writing course, and a



developmental reading course—combined into a three-hour block of time three days per week, for which the students receive nine hours of credit. A personal development/study skills course is offered two days a week, for a program total of twelve units. Basic skills instruction in the HELP program centers around the information and reading materials generated by the content class. Assignments and practice exercises deal directly with concepts and requirements of the content area.

(Continued on Page 5)

COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND THE MLA

Most community college instructors perceive the Modern Language Association as an organization cool to—if not downright hostile toward—the two-year colleges. Some attendees at the MLA Annual Conventions have experienced the cold shoulder from university colleagues once the professors learn that they are talking with a mere "two-yearer." Many community college instructors do not join the MLA, for they feel they are not wanted. Now, however, a change is occurring, both in how the MLA looks at community college instructors and in how we look at the MLA.

After the 1982 MLA Annual Convention, Linda Sledge (Westchester Community College) got together with Jim Blake (Nassau Community College) and David Kievitt (Bergen Community College) to plan a gathering of some kind for community college instructors at the 1983 MLA. Out of their planning grew the first-ever community college session at the MLA—an open meeting titled "Two-Year College Faculty and the MLA: Strategies for Change."

This meeting, held on a cold afternoon in late December, at the 1983 MLA Annual Convention in New York, drew over forty people to hear what the five panelists—Linda Sledge, Jim Blake, David Kievitt, Barbara Bilson (Santa Monica College), and Paul Saylor (Northern Virginia Community College)—had to say. After the presentation of papers discussing the plight of the community college scholar (too many classes, no support, no rewards), the problems of class size and numbers of classses, the perception by community college faculty that they are not welcomed in the hallowed halls of academe (*i.e.* at the MLA), the participants voiced their concerns and aired their grievances. Unanimously, the attendees agreed that they would welcome and support a community college session at the next MLA.

With this mandate, Professors Sledge, Blake and Kievitt set about to see what could be done. With the kind encouragement of Phyllis Franklin and the sponsorship of the Association of Departments of English, Professor Blake submitted a proposal to hold a special session—"Proposing an MLA Commission on the Professional Development of Two-Year College Faculty"—at the 1984 MLA in Washington, D.C. Panalists at that time will include Barbara Bilson and Professors Kievitt and Sledge presenting papers on "Unrealistic Teaching Loads and Threatened Literature Sections," "Promotion and Tenure Policies," and "The Plight of the Community College Scholar." The session will be a continuous double session—the presentations and discussion followed by an informal cash bar designed to help create a network of interested colleagues.

Those of us involved in planning the session for the 1984 MLA want to hear from anyone who is now a member of the MLA or who is planning to become one. We are trying to create a network among the MLA community college members. Please contact Barbara Bilson at Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90405, if you are a member or are considering becoming one, so that I can notify you of any MLA activities or business that would be of special interest to community college faculty.

"NOT MY JOB"

(Continued from Page 4)

The desired results are the improvement of the students' basic skills and the students' better understanding of the subject area material.

Goals of the program include the integration of skills instruction and content instruction, the promotion of retention through cognitive and attitudinal development, and the provision of a supportive learning environment. The HELP program, designed primarily for high-risk, non-traditional students, has as its additional goal the mainstreaming of such students into regular college classes.

Instructions in the basic skills, when integrated with the content curriculum, involves the teaching of many skills. In the HELP program, the reading instructor covers skills like finding the main idea (using the content textbook), SQ3R and other reading methods, making cognitive maps, paraphrasing, making valid inferences, and vocabulary development. The writing instructor concentrates on grammar, spelling, sentence and paragraph development, and compiling and organizing material for a research paper.

A TYPICAL HELP CLASS

Since the HELP class is team taught, the three instructors are present throughout the three-hour block of each class. During one particular week, the sociology instructor has presented lectures, assigned reading, and has had the students watch a film and listen to tapes discussing the difference between love and infatuation. Now it is Friday. The first class hour opens with the reading instructor presenting a lesson on vocabulary taken from the sociology textbook. This develops into a vocabulary assignment, and the three teachers of the team are available for immediate assistance to those students who are having difficulty with the assignment and to check the work of those who have finished.

After a short break, the class resumes. The sociology instructor briefly recaps the points covered during the week. She finishes her discussion by presenting a writing assignment that asks the students to read an account of a male-female relationship and to demonstrate, using the information they have in their notes from the week, whether the couple was in love or infatuated. Immediately, the writing instructor approaches the board and begins his presentation of how to approach this particular writing assignment. Eliciting responses from the students, he helps them devise a plan for their writing.

As the students begin the first part of their writing—prewriting and finding a thesis—the three instructors go from student to student, intervening on the spot, perhaps suggesting more details in the prewriting or questioning one student to help her discover what point she wants to make, commending another student for his clearly worded thesis. The next hour is not a quiet one: the teachers talk to the students, the students talk with each other—showing what they have written, asking advice, inviting praise. The class ends, each student carrying away what is needed to begin the reading and writing assignments for the next week.

In the HELP classroom, as the students encounter difficulty with their reading or writing or understanding of the sociology materials, they receive immediate help. Instead of sinking further and further into the morass of half-grasped concepts, unsuccessful attempts to make do with a book beyond their level and to complete writing they don't know how to do, these students are taught how to ask questions about what they don't understand, are guided through the reading and given the tools by which to approach the textbook, and are shown how to break a writing task into its component parts and to build their own writing into a coherent whole.

This is the day the team gets together after class to assess the week's work, to plan for the coming week, and to support each other. They are tired, but satisfied; for the students show progress, they haven't dropped out, and their chances for success in other courses seems to be improved. And now an art teacher, a history teacher, and a music teacher are going to form teams with reading and writing teachers.

SUCCESSES AND DIFFICULTIES

Evaluative studies of the HELP program done by the Sacramento City College Assessment Center, under the auspices of Dr. Dorothy Bohr, Associate Dean of Administration, and Dr. Dorothy Bray, Dean of the Division of Languages and Literature, show that HELP students attempted more units in subsequent semesters, had higher grade point averages, and had better retention rates than a control group that did not participate in the HELP program. The reading instructors found that the students' mean scores increased at least one grade level. (The students were pre- and post-tested by the standardized reading test, TABE [Test of Adult Basic Education]. More significantly, the students demonstrated marked attitudinal changes. Informal pre- and post-attitudinal surveys reveal in the students an increased positive attitude toward learning tasks and toward themselves as learners.

Difficulties, however, do exist when a course integrates skills and content instruction: (1) Content instructors have to be willing to focus on process rather than on acquisition of information and to cover less material or a narrower scope of material than usual. (2) Time must be given for instructors to plan their goals, discuss their approaches, set up the class calendar, and share their concerns—both before the class begins and during the course.

TEAM TEACHING

Most important to the success of the HELP program are the teams of teachers. The team should be compatible in educational philosophies and consistent in classroom policies. Instructors should not form a team based solely on the academic competency of each member. Rather, each member of the team should have certain qualities and these qualities become the "glue" that holds the team together.

Team instruction should (1) be willing to share ideas and attitudes about students, learning, and life; (2) have a sense of humor; (3) enjoy working with students and with other colleagues; (4) respect students and colleagues for the uniqueness of each person; (5) be willing to take risks, try new methods; (6) be learners themselves; (7) be excited by generating new ideas and planning with others how to implement them; and (8) not believe that there is only one right way to teach a course.

A team cannot teach together if the "chemistry" is not there. If the members of the team do not share the eight points mentioned above, one member of the team inevitably ends up doing more work than the others and the team covers less content in the class. A teacher's ego must be subordinate to the best interests of the course as a whole; team teaching isn't suitable for those of us who want to be "stars."

The HELP program effectively integrates content and skills instruction. Integration of basic skills with content instruction offers the students the opportunity to apply immediately skill acquisition to a relevant learning situation. The students do not learn skills in an isolated remedial or developmental class nor use materials that differ from what is assigned in their "regular" courses. This model of integrated instruction can work with almost any type of content course on any community college campus. Such a course benefits not only students but also instructors, for it gives them the opportunity to learn and experience techniques that will aid their students in the acquisition of skills necessary for success in college.

HOVV YOV OVGHT TO HCLD
your penne,

UC BERKELEY FRESHMAN COMP REQUIREMENTS: ECCTYC RESPONDS

The Liaison Committee on English has taken a strong stand regarding the grave abuse of articulation policies and procedures by the University of California at Berkeley in its unilateral decision to change the nature of English 1A-B programs. At the spring meeting of the Board of Directors of ECCTYC, that group passed the following resoluton and directed that it be sent to the Articulation Council of California. ECCTYC is adamant that no institution has the license to act unilaterally in matters that affect the transfer of countless numbers of students, that potentially affect English programs at all transfer institutions, and that result in academic monopoly, not academic freedom. The articulation process guarantees that when a campus contemplates a drastic change whose effects go far beyond the boundaries of its institution, other segments of higher education and representatives of secondary schools will be consulted at a very early stage in its deliberations; UC Berkeley, has chosen to ignore this fundamental articulation policy. ECCTYC urges those community college English Departments that have not yet responded to Berkeley's demand for information about their transfer freshman composition course not to comply with that request, or at least not until the Articulation Council has some chance to rectify this matter.

WHEREAS, the University of California at Berkeley has chosen unilaterally to alter the unit value, the content, and the philosophy of its English 1A-B sequence, and

WHEREAS this reorganization of English 1A-B was done in violation of acceptable articulation procedures, and in violation of already established articulation agreements,

BE IT RESOLVED that the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges joins the Liaison Committee on English in condemning this action, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ECCTYC voices its support of the position taken by the Liaison Committee in requesting that the Board of Directors of the Articulation Council take immediate steps to deal with this serious problem.

WORKSHOPPING
The Only Way to Go

By JOHN F. PARKER
San Diego City College

After thirty years of teaching (twenty teaching college English), you'd think that I would have learned a fundamental point: I should stop working harder than my students. Or to put it another way, my students should work harder on their writing than I do on my marking.

A few years ago, I assessed the way I had been teaching English classes. The class atmosphere was always congenial: all my students listened attentively to my lectures, several engaged in open dialogue, a few never spoke. They all took several quizzes on mechanics and wrote a few papers (sometimes in class, sometimes to be handed in on due dates). I took all their work home, corrected it, and filled my mark book with lists of scores. In short, my writing and reading course was really a lecture course; students entered and left anonymously—occasionally interacting but never really getting to know how their writing and reading processes compared with their peers. From my observations, other instructors in the English Department were teaching the same way. There was little or no sharing of what any of us did in our classrooms. I was afraid to ask lest my colleagues think I was being critical, but I did wonder, "Isn't it curious how secretive we communication experts have become?"

At the same time, I looked enviously at how my colleagues from other disciplines spent their free time. Were they taking home stacks of papers to mark every week? Did they have a pallor from burning the midnight oil? Did they walk from their offices on Friday after class as though they were going to an execution—their own—and return a Monday-morning martyr with a shopping bag filled with student essays? Not at all! They watched TV at night (without feeling guilty), played an occasional tennis game in the sun, and fairly skipped down the hall on

Fridays to spend a weekend fishing or camping. And did their students suffer? Not in the least! "What am I doing wrong?" I questioned. "Am I on a power trip where I need to put red F's and D's on poor writers' papers?" I was certainly suffering and, I think, so were many of my students. I was thoroughly student-dependent for my existence, and they were teacher-dependent.

At about this time, while I was involved in a lot of soul searching, I enrolled in a word-processing course. There were too many people in the class, so we had to take turns getting our hands on the three computers in the classroom. I knew the students would have learned how to process words a lot faster had we had more "hands-on" time. As I sat on the sidelines, I thought about the ways students learn a skill.

If I were teaching swimming, painting, or chemistry, my students would demand that they swim, paint, or do their own experiments. They would be horrified if I stood them around the pool for a two-week lecture series on swimming while I talked about and demonstrated how they were to blow bubbles or to do the crawl and then sent them away dry with the statement, "In two weeks you will be tested on how well you do ten laps of the pool." Or in my art class if I lectured on the results of using paint with different brushes on different types of paper and showed them examples of several paintings, only to send them away without paint under their nails but with, "In two weeks I expect to see *your* masterpiece so that I can judge it in relation to the Masters." Or in my chemistry class if I told them that they were not allowed to look at what their peers were doing with all those flames, flasks, and flagons and sent them away with their heads filled with only their own inconclusions and my statement, "You will be examined on the results of all the experiments you have done so far."

On one particular evening at the end of our two-hour word-processing course, I realized I had spent only ten minutes on a computer. I didn't need the instructor; I needed the machine!

Out of that frustration, I made a major decision about how I would teach composition. My writing students would have opportunities to engage in the process of writing every day, to generate ideas everyday, to receive peer feedback everyday, and, whenever they needed, to engage in a one-to-one conference with me. I would place each of my students on his/her own individualized program. I would throw away my mark book in favor of an individualized progress chart for each student. I was determined that I would no longer take home any more stacks of papers to mark. I was determined that my students would write ten times more than any of my previous students had ever written. I was determined to free myself from lecturing to entire classes on grammar, punctuation, and the other technical aspects of writing. I would even try to stop talking about unity, coherence, style, slant, and so on. I was determined to make my students independent of me.

In order to effect these awesomely frightening changes in my teaching, I experimented with my students. To involve my students in the writing process every day, I would need to create a workshop atmosphere in my classroom. I would set up my English classroom as if it were a newspaper editorial room. Before the reporters and feature writers of a newspaper have their work published and read by their intended readers, they go back and forth using three steps: prewriting (generating ideas, interviewing, investigating, talking, listening, reading); drafting (composing their pieces); and revising (showing their work to fellow writers and finally their chief editor in order to reform, rework, and rewrite any aspect of it).

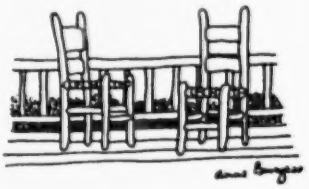
My small classroom could never be a spacious newspaper room, because I

had too many students; they simply could not compose with the many distractions in an active workshop atmosphere. I, therefore, insisted that students were to do all "serious" drafting outside the workshop. In the classroom they would be able to engage in prewriting and editing activities.

Most newspaper writers have specialized interests; and each newspaper has its political writers, sports reporters, theatre critics. (The theatre community in my home town never forgave our local newspaper for filling the vacated theatre-critic post with a sports writer. To be guaranteed a good review, the theatre groups in Vancouver had to fill their seasons of plays with lots of action and plenty of shooting. It took a few years before this critic could sit through Strindberg's *The Father* or Shakespeare's *King Lear*.) Students should also be allowed to specialize and write to fulfill their interests and needs. During the term I was able to give assignments to fulfill my English Department's requirements: that all students know how to write a literary and a research essay. But, more important, I was able to give the future secretaries, mechanics, scientists, home economists, teachers, and others the assignments that they wanted or needed to do. In placing students on their own individualized programs, I provided a set of different assignments for different interest groups: arts, science, technical, academic, and commercial. Because I often encountered many mature students in my classes who were taking the course "because they were interested in improving their writing," I set up a general interest program. Finally, I set up programs for weak writers and ESL students. By setting up a writing workshop, I was also able to make English a service course. It always seemed peculiar to me that many students saw a difference between writing an essay for history and writing one for English. I, therefore, allowed my students to work on part of, or all of, their assignments for other courses *before* they had to submit them to their other instructors. In this way student writing became more real, and because students wrote for real audiences, their editors in the workshop were of more assistance. Other instructors were happy to read a well-edited paper, and I got to edit many "different" kinds of papers. Gone were the days that I had to read dozens of papers on virtually the same topic.

By placing students on their own special interest programs, I was then able to stress the importance of their considering all of the writing variables besides **topic**. Students realized that they had many different **audiences** to write for. Their **purpose** for writing became clear. (When I think about it, my past students must have thought that their only reason for writing in my class was so that I could correct their English.) They also had to decide which **format** best suited their purposes (argumentative essay, report, memo, letter to the editor, and so forth.) In addition, students saw the importance of considering the **situation** surrounding the writing occasion (They examined what their feelings, attitudes, and relationships were to their topic and their audience as well as what their audience's feelings were to them and their topic. By the time they had considered their situation thoroughly, they understood the importance of distance, slant, style and whether to write in a straightforward or an ironic manner.) Finally, students decided what **voice** to use: their own voices or to adopt a persona. (I found that many weak writers become courageous when writing from someone else's viewpoint.)

In order to effect a smoothly run writing workshop, I needed to provide my students with enough relevant



material to solve any given writing problem. As a result, the material needed to be comprehensive and often, self-paced. If I were to be available for one-to-one conferencing **during class time**, I could not waste time in teaching students the rules of the comma and semicolon or the difference between honorific and pejorative slant. I needed to provide various texts, recordings, and film strips so that my students could have all the answers at their fingertips, right in the classroom. Because I was never blessed with the same classroom for all my freshman English classes, I had to carry all this material from room to room. After a semester of building my muscles, I got another idea. Because I wasn't taking home papers, I had time to develop a collection of handouts: exercises, workshops, games, and other activities (with answers) so that students could work alone, in pairs, or groups to become independent of me. They often learned what they needed to know by teaching and questioning each other.

If you wish to set up a similar workshop, you should begin most of

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WORKSHOPPING

(Continued from Page 6)

your class periods with ten minutes of journal writing or an instant writing response. Because students will be working on a number of assignments (sometimes three at the same time), *these* should follow a hierarchial plan:

a) before passing their papers to their intended audiences, students should be able to see their final editor, for a one-to-one tutorial session;
b) students should be able to have a piece of their writing critiqued by at least two of their fellow

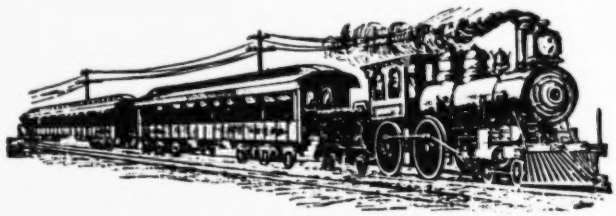
classmates to help them in their revision processes. Sometimes students could take home each other's paper to evaluate, but class time should always be available for them to discuss their evaluations;
c) students should be able to engage in a brainstorming session with other students, and perhaps you, to discuss ideas they are thinking about for new writing projects;
d) if students are not working on a particular assignment, they should be able to work through various exercises and activities with fellow students in order to refine their style or to learn how to correct errors that they frequently make. (The impetus for doing these comes from you during a one-to-one session, or, as the term passes and students become more adept at peer evaluation, from their fellow classmates. You will usually be able to offer at least a couple of specific suggestions to a student writer.);
e) students can work alone on various sentence-combining exercises in order to keep improving their writing style.

Implementing the hierarchial system produces excellent results: students seldom engage in non-productive endeavors. For example, a student working by himself on a sentence-combining exercise would, if asked by a fellow student to help her understand pejorative slant, be expected to stop his work and help; a student engaged in peer evaluation would excuse herself for a few minutes when her turn came to see you for a one-to-one tutorial.

Since September 1979, when I first started to put my ideas into practice, I have (with the help of my students and several members of the English Department) developed a plan for teaching composition that successfully utilizes the workshop approach. Yesterday and today (18 January 1984) at the San Diego City College, I met my five freshman composition and reading classes (total 160 students) of the new semester. Were I using my old method of a few years ago, I would assign very few essays, lest I succumb under the marking load. But I know that in the five-month term, students will complete the following. They will make 126 journal entries; complete twelve out-of-class papers which they will take through their own writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising with their peers and me, and polishing for their intended readers); write four demand papers in class time, under exam conditions; complete anywhere from ten to fifteen special writing assignments either to perfect a particular writing trick-of-the-trade or correct an annoying technical error (primarily they will do these papers for peers only); and submit two diagnostic pieces of writing that they will do on the first and last day of the term.

Needless to say, as a result of all their writing, I (but more importantly *they*) will note a great improvement in their writing style. In fact, at midterm I ask my students, "What grade do you think you will receive?" I'm no longer surprised that I concur with their prediction. If a student is dissatisfied with his/her midterm prediction, we—through a one-to-one conference—map out a strategy to increase his/her grade.

During this present term at San Diego City College, I plan to continue examining various ways of ensuring that, by the end of the term, my students will be independent writers. I facetiously tell them, "I am teaching myself out of a job." But I continue more seriously, "For this term I will be a *part* of your writing process: sometimes helping you generate an idea, sometimes acting as your final editor. If you do not learn to become a totally independent writer, you are going to have to learn how to depend on



your friends, relatives, and co-workers to help you come up with worthwhile topics and to evaluate your important writing." I then ask how many of them will be in future positions where they will never have to write something important. The discussion that ensues clearly illustrates that all jobs involve some writing. They point out the importance of writing a resume, reporting an accident, bidding on a plumbing job, writing up a patient report, writing a letter to the editor, writing to their child's teacher. "By the end of this term," I continue, "you may never again have occasion to write for an English teacher, but you will have many opportunities to write. During the term don't write *to* me unless you have some very good reason and expect a response."

"So," you may ask, "what do you do with your free time now that you use the workshop approach?" Quite simply, I am trying to convince other English instructors to set up writing workshops. In 1982 Addison-Wesley Canada published my textbook, *The Writer's Workshop*; in 1983 they published *The Process of Writing*. Both books come with an Implementation Guide and Instructor's Manual for setting up a workshop approach. In 1985 Harcourt Brace Jovanovich will be publishing *The Independent Writer* (working title) and Addison-Wesley Menlo Park will be publishing the American version of *The Writer's Workshop* (working title). I could not possibly have written these books if I were still using my old methods of teaching composition. I also go to the theatre, read, play racquetball three times a week, and enjoy life. In addition, I have been a presenter at a dozen or so conferences on how to implement a writing workshop.

But more importantly, my students leave at the end of each semester, if not completely independent writers, at least better writers who appreciate the importance of their writing processes, writing variables, writing workshop, and self- and peer-evaluation. They are no longer teacher dependent, and I am no longer student dependent.

LITERACY/MORALE

(Continued from Page 1)

designed to get more writing into the student experience without burdening the teacher with extra evaluation tasks. (These and other techniques are described more fully in Toby Fulwiler's excellent book, *Language Connections: Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum*, [NCTE, 1982]).

Faculty response to the program here has been uniformly positive—in fact, it has been enthusiastic. This past summer [1983] all participants, when asked on the evaluation form if they would recommend the program to colleagues, answered "absolutely." Participants

have shared the results of the seminar by publishing a series of "Writing Tips" in the weekly faculty newsletter and by setting up individual workshops for me to conduct in their own departments. This latter element of the program helps me spread the word across our rather large (30,000+ students) campus, and it also establishes one or two members of each department (the seminar participants) as the "writing experts" in that department. Seminar members report that after these workshops they have had many requests for ideas and materials from their department colleagues. Follow-up interviews show that participants in the program are assigning more writing in their classes as a result of the program.

Why have the results been so good? Although a number of factors have contributed to the success of the program here, I think two stand out. *First*, the program was not imposed from above by the administration but came from within as a result of a call to action from the administration. From the beginning it has not been a program which has had to answer the objections of the faculty, but was developed by the faculty precisely because they felt such a program was needed. The administration has been supportive rather than dictatorial, and faculty appreciate the difference. *Second*, it has been a program for those faculty who are the best teachers—the experimenters, those who go back to their departments and have an influence on their peers. Because of the nature of the clientele, I see myself as a facilitator rather than a teacher in the seminar, and I think the distinction is important. I present them with the latest research in the writing process, suggest some general application, and then put them to work in peer groups to apply the information in specific disciplines. In the resulting discussions I learn as much from them as they do from me, and we all gain a great deal of respect for one another's fields of study.

Indeed, the feeling of collegiality that has developed over the course of each seminar has been marvelous to behold. Spirits were so high at the end of each summer session that I had to come up with an activity for closure on the final day, since no one wanted to leave; a wine and cheese reception in the faculty lounge seemed to do the trick. The seminar had given teachers who usually work in isolation a chance to work in a non-threatening environment with peers who shared their deepest professional concerns, and they found it inspiring as well as useful as a result. At first I thought this response was an interesting by-product of the program, but now I view it as significant. If declining student literacy is one of the chief causes of low faculty morale, then certainly cross-disciplinary faculty seminars such as this one are a good way to lift the morale—to show that we care about our colleagues as well as our students and that we are in fact as well as name an academic community.

BLOCK ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS
A Solution to the Literacy Problems of Motivated Students

By CONNIE MISSIMER
Los Medanos College

I am not an English instructor. The following plan was born of my previous failed attempts to teach literacy along with philosophy or humanities to more than 180 students per semester. Forgive the heresy, but I've come to view "writing across the curriculum" as "making mistakes across the curriculum"—students just grind in bad writing habits when instructors like me have no time to consistently correct them. Furthermore, according to the *Faculty Association of California Community Colleges Bulletin* of November, 1981, ". . .the average U.S. graduate reads at the eighth grade level, [and] fifty percent of those we attract are below average. . . ." Given the current instructional load of five courses, it is impossible, even with our fine student-tutor program, to do much for our students who want to progress rapidly. These students need an alternative curriculum that will keep them motivated.

Last fall, after anguishing for the hundredth time over this situation, I hit upon an idea: to have one instructor teach one group of students a block of, say, three courses, for example, Freshman Composition, Critical Thinking, and Humanities. (Given our clientele, one or two of the courses should probably be skills-building.) Teaching a block would significantly reduce the number of students the instructor must monitor; in my case, the total, calculated at five courses with an average of 36 students per class, would be 108, not 180. The following figures illustrate the difference between the regular instructional load and that of the block:

Regular Load

Students/Class:	36	36	36	36	36
Courses:	1	2	3	4	5

Total students: 180/Courses: 5

Block Load

Students/Class:	36	36	36
Courses:	1	4	5
	2		
	3		

Total students: 108/Courses: 5

One might even essay two block, working intensively with two groups of students:

Students/Class:	36	36
Courses:	1	4
	2	5
	3	

Total students: 72/Courses: 5

The courses within a block would be coordinated. So, for example, during the week when theories of justice were presented in the humanities course, students would be writing compositions, doing critical reading, and studying the logical structure of ideas about justice.

In addition to the integration of three courses in an interesting way, the simultaneous reduction in number of students and intensification of effort expended per student have, I think, several advantages. Most important, the students should learn more rapidly. As things now stand, I might be aware

that a student is confusing the reason with the conclusion or is using awkward language, but I cannot do more than write comments on the paper and penalize. With the block, there is far more opportunity for a thorough follow-up to help the student correct her errors.

Beyond consistently rooting out errors, the instructor could require special readings or other projects, tailoring the classes somewhat to individual interests. Students will have a better chance to build rapport and perhaps even the esprit characteristics of areas like music and athletics, where people get to know one another well and become mutually supportive. And given a more personal involvement with each student, the instructor should expect fewer students to lose heart and to drop the class.

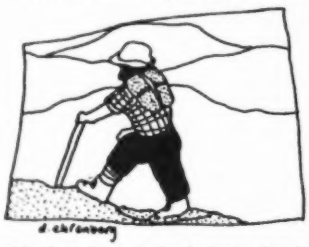
Finally, blocks may improve relations between content and skills instructors. It seems to me that teachers in different disciplines are somewhat like the farmers and the ranchers: each group doesn't understand the needs and pressures of the other very well (see Fred Fischer's sympathetic allusion to "overburdened colleagues in other disciplines" in the December 1983 *i.e.*). What better way to get someone like me to stop making snide remarks about writing across the curriculum than to have me teach English?

At this point, I should raise the best objections to the block idea that I have heard. First, few instructors would be able or willing to "teach across the curriculum." This is probably true. On the other hand, only a few instructors would be needed. There will probably be only enough highly motivated students at each college to fill one or two blocks each semester. I hope more teachers than needed would volunteer to teach block courses, and they would take turns teaching the courses. A math-physics block has interesting possibilities. So does history, economics, and a compostion course.

But these dazzling possibilities are clouded over by another worry. What if English instructors resent the block as an intrusion? Ideally, of course, English instructors would plan their blocks in cooperation with the teachers whose turf they would be "violating." If everyone remained open to advice and correction, however, and held appropriate credentials, turf-guarding would seem petty. It would be unecumenical, but an English instructor might offer a block consisting of composition, critical thinking, and a literature course.

For their part, students might not sign up in sufficient numbers to warrant a block. They may fear to take three, even two, courses from the same instructor, who might turn out to be boring or grade unfairly. The potential clientele may be too small. The average community college student takes less than nine units. In addition, many students will already have taken one of the courses offered in the block, thus disqualifying them. All of these concerns demonstrate the need for a good deal of publicity to inform and to attract students. We're embarking on such a publicity campaign at Los Medanos, where I will teach the first block in Fall 1985.

A number of students come to us dismally unprepared, drifting, and indifferent. One of them enrolls in, say, three courses. Each of three harried instructors discovers part (or most) of the student's academic limitations, and each does a little bit to help. The approach is piecemeal and slow, but given the student's indifference, it seems quite fair. And we shouldn't quibble over whether this "little bit" consists of improving the student's grammar or of inculcating more philosophy. We simply don't have the time to make this student academically whole. Even if we picked twenty lucky, indifferent students by lot and worked



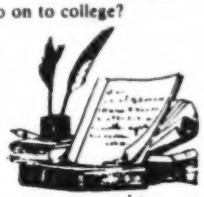
with them intensively, I doubt that it would make any difference. It's the equally large number of students who really want to improve but are lost in the shuffle of numbers: they haunt us. They deserve our best and wholesome efforts.

Johnny Needs to Write . . . And Write

By DAVID PECK
Composition Coordinator
California State University
Long Beach

There have been celebrations up and down the State since Governor Deukmejian agreed to fund education in amounts happily above the austerity levels of recent years. But, in the midst of all the good news, the nagging question persists: will the money be used effectively to teach students? Or will we still have the situation, after several years of increased funding, where most of our students still can't write?

The figures don't lie. Half of the students entering the University of California need some kind of remedial writing help. A third of the students enrolling at campuses of California State University and Colleges (where expectations and budgets are both lower) must sign up for developmental writing classes. At the community colleges, we now need several levels of basic writing classes to teach sentences, paragraphs, grammar, and such. If these are the facts for our college-bound students, what are the statistics for the hundreds of thousands who do not go on to college?



The major writing problem for California high school graduates is that *they have not written*. They have "done time," instead, in overcrowded English classes where teachers, to survive, have opted to teach grammar instead of composition. As David Savage pointed out recently in the *Los Angeles Times* ("California's Writing Teachers Facing a Problem in Mathematics," 15 February 1984), a high school English teacher with five or six sections of thirty-five to thirty-eight students cannot begin to assign the amount of writing students need—and she doesn't.

But (and here is the thesis for *this* piece of writing) we can't teach students to write without having them write. We can't teach writing with reading, with grammar, or with films. All of these activities may *help*, but, by themselves, they will not give students the necessary linguistic and cognitive skills that comprise the writing activity. The only way to learn to write is *to write*—and then write and write and write. The act of writing, which researchers have not yet fully explained, leads to the acquisition of the very skills be-

(Continued on Page 11)

News From Our Regions

"Upstate/Downstate" features brief items of interest about individual teachers or individual colleges. Please send "Upstate/Downstate" news items to:
Jack Gill, College of San Mateo: Regions I, II, III.
Bert Woodruff, Fresno City College: Regions IV, V, VI.
Lois Powers, Fullerton College: Regions VII, VIII.
Ann Maioroff, Palomar College: Regions IX, X.

REGION II: SAN FRANCISCO BAY

Directors: John J. Callen, City College of San Francisco; Patricia McGrath, Chabot College.

Patricia McGrath of Chabot College, co-ordinator of Region II, has a continuing grant for her successful Puente Project. John Callen of CCSF, also a director of this region, has been spending the spring semester on leave from his teaching duties to man the Public Information Office on his campus; he returns to the English Department in the fall. Susan Pettit of the English Department at College of San Mateo was recently elected to the Executive Board of the statewide Academic Senate. At the recent ECCTYC spring conference, Jim Cagnacci of CCSF was elected to another term as ECCTYC president. On May 1, San Francisco State University, assisted by ECCTYC, will be hosting a regional meeting for community college English department representatives to strengthen articulation ties among postsecondary educational institutions in the area.

REGION V:SOUTH/CENTRAL VALLEY

Directors: Bert Woodruff, Fresno City College; Bill Decker, College of the Sequoias.

On April 5, teachers from College of Sequoias, Fresno, Kings River, and West Hills gathered at COS for a regional meeting. The principal focus in the informal discussion groups was freshman composition. There was some enthusiasm for forming a standard committee of representatives from the region's community colleges to continue the discussion so that we can agree on reasonably common standards for this course.

Mary McFarland, Fresno City College, was elected to represent Region V; Bill Decker, College of the Sequoias was reelected.

REGION VI: CENTRAL COAST

Directors: Jeannette Webber, Santa Barbara City College; Judy Markline, Allan Hancock College.

Jeannette (Jinny) Webber is currently co-directing Santa Barbara City College's first Education Abroad program. She is in residence in Cambridge, England, with a group of forty students. They are taking courses in English literature, art, and history taught by Jinny and Joan Grunman at the Cambridge YMCA and are involved in field trips to London, Oxford, and Stratford-on-Avon.

Rose Brown, Bob Isaacson, and Judy Markline have written a textbook for basic writing, emphasizing writing as process. *Thinking Out Loud on Paper*, published by Kendall/Hunt (1983), uses Mina Shaughnessy's seven basic patterns of thought as the format for the writing assignments. Using their text, Rose and Judy presented a workshop at CATE, demonstrating sentence combining as a precomposing technique.

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Jo Ray McCuen, Glendale City College; Lloyd Thomas, Los Angeles Mission College.

Sharon Scull, Glendale City College, attended the Community College Humanities Association Conference in San Francisco in November. Of particular interest to her was the pre-conference workshop on "Teaching Critical Thinking." The workshop leaders addressed the new emphasis on the Humanities and Critical Thinking (Dr. Robert H. Ennis) and the recent changes in the teaching of logic (Dr. J. Anthony Blair).

Glendale College, as part of its interest in developing an inter-disciplinary, intercultural Humanities program, sponsored a staff development workshop on "Interdisciplinary Team Teaching." The workshop was conducted by Sharon Scull and Ray Glienna.

Barbara Bilson, Santa Monica College, spent the fall semester on sabbatical investigating Writing-Across-the-Curriculum programs in California community colleges. In her study, she visited thirty-seven colleges and made telephone contact with almost all of the others.

Susan Obler, Rio Hondo, is completing her doctorate at the University of Texas, Austin, under the direction of John E. Roueche. Her dissertation topic is "Writing Across the Curriculum: Faculty Perceptions and Practices at Selected Community Colleges."

Twenty-five instructors from various colleges in Region VII met 3 May at Glendale City College. Joining the group were Bill Anderson, Chair of the English Department, CSU Northridge, and Dr. Mahlan Gaumer, coordinator of the Freshman Writing Program. Jo Ray McCune (Glendale) provided the group with a complete, traditional "high tea," and she and Lloyd Thomas (LA Mission) led the discussion, which ranged from the new Berkeley English 1A-1B requirements to the place of the research paper in English 1A.

REGION VIII: SOUTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Sunny Laub, Santa Ana College; Lois Powers, Fullerton College.

Dr. Margaret Boegeman of Cypress College has been awarded a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Science Foundation under their program "Ethics and Values in Science and Technology" (EVIST). She will study for two years with an interdisciplinary team at UCLA's Program for Medicine, Law and Human Values. The subject for her investigation will be "Women and Mental Illness: A Comparative Study for Traditional and Feminist Views, Their Social and Ethical Implications." This study is an outgrowth of an interdisciplinary humanities program at Cypress College called "Choices," aimed at students in the science and vocational fields. "Choices" was seed by a pilot grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1982-83.

The Humanities Division of Fullerton College sponsored a hands-on Apple Word Processing workshop for eighteen instructors and staff. The workshop was conducted by Lois Powers. There is an increasing interest among Humanities instructors in the possible applications of word processing to teaching writing and language.

Long Beach City College sponsored a second workshop as part of its FIPSE grant at Cypress College, 23 February. This workhop explored the objectives and course content of Freshman Composition. Participating community colleges were Cypress, Long Beach, and Fullerton, and participating state colleges were Fullerton and Long Beach.

The Writing-Across-the-Disciplines Committee, an all-campus committee at Fullerton College, participated in a workshop conducted by Dr. Dorothy Augustine from Chapman College. The workshop is an extension of the committee's investigation of possible approaches that might be considered at a community college for a writing-across-the-disciplines program.

To help insure the success of a program, Dr. Augustine suggested a number of guidelines. Four of the most significant were (1) that writing across the disciplines cannot be mandated, (2) that the selling point should be writing as learning, (3) that teachers should receive "perks" for their participation, and (4) that the administration must actively support the program.

TEACHING TEACHERS

(Continued from Page 3)

writing skills with limited learning and go on to connect their own professional malaise with the limited learning skills of their students. If teachers can describe specifically the way weak skills affect what is done and not done in their courses, they will be able to build a viable cross-discipline writing program.

Once instructors have described the problem, they can then ask what it is they want students to be able to do. Again, the more specific the teachers can be, the better they will be able to discover the methods they might pursue. I find it useful, for instance, to ask teachers to find or write the kind of short essay answer they would like to get from their students. Then we can explore the kinds of directions, practice, reinforcement, and training a teacher could set up to get that response. I have even occasionally asked small groups of teachers what they would do to get a certain kind and level of performance if they were to be paid $1,000 per student who achieved that goal. Of course, part of the answer to that question is a matter of time, but as some teachers have told me, achieving goals of that sort is also a matter of clarity, organization, and commitment.

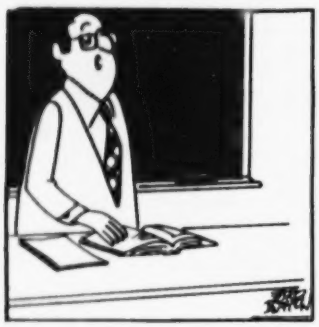
It may be that in the kind of program I am advocating teachers would end up learning about the theories of Britton and about writing as process. They might keep journals, practice prewriting strategies, and read each other's drafts just as teachers do in so many cross-discipline programs. They could also meet in small groups to design and assess writing tasks and to share ideas for class activities that prepare students to write. They might also read and discuss useful articles on subjects such as the relation of writing and thinking, and they might even listen to presentations. (But, they would do so for goals they had chosen.)

Of course, no program blossoms spontaneously. Programs in staff development need leadership, planning, and support. But the real key to their success is a sensitive respect for teachers and a practical, problem-centered emphasis.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Academic Freedom OR Academic Monopoly

As many of you know, in addition to being president of ECCTYC I have spent this year as chair of the Liaison Committee on English of the Articulation Council. At last fall's meeting of the Liaison Committee, the members were informed of a movement on the campus of the University of California, Berkeley, to increase the unit value of English 1A-1B and to alter drastically the content and standards for those courses. The committee directed me to contact appropriate persons on the Berkeley campus to insure that longstanding articulation procedures were followed before any changes were initiated. Though I sent two letters and made several phone calls, I have yet to receive any response from the university. In the interim, however, the Berkeley campus distributed to California college campuses a questionnaire directly related to the content of and the subsequent accreditation for all English 1A-1B equivalent courses. If you have not yet seen that document, you should contact your department chair or division head and see for yourselves what Berkeley is attempting



to impose on the academic world.

On 23-24 February, the Liaison Committee on English held its spring session. Appalled by the cavalier attitude of the Berkeley campus, the committee members once again directed me to represent their views, this time to the Articulation Council's Board of Directors in the hope that this body would succeed where we had failed.

To make clear to you the great concern we have, I am devoting the rest of this column to quoting the content of the letter that I sent to Mr. Daniel Saracino, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Articulation Council:

> I have been directed by the Liaison Committee on English to address to you, as Chair of the Articulation Council, this letter stating our grave concern over the abuse of articulation policies and procedures by the University of California, Berkeley. I am enclosing copies of the correspondence this committee addressed to the Berkeley campus after our Fall 1983 meeting in order to provide you with background on this issue. On the basis of imformation I received from Dr. Paul Alpers, I wrote to Dean Leonard Kuhi on November 15, stating our concerns and requesting a reply. To date, I have had no response from Dean Kuhi.
>
> Not only has the Liaison Committee been ignored by the Berkeley campus, but that campus has proceeded in the interim to distribute to college campuses a questionnaire directly related to the content of and subsequent accreditation for all English 1A-1B equivalent courses. Though the letter is dated June 1983, we can discover no English Departments that received a copy earlier than late November. I am also enclosing a copy of that document for your perusal.
>
> The Liaison Committee upholds the right of individual campuses to establish course content, to set standards, and to re-evaluate and change both content and standards when they choose. However, we are equally adamant that no institution has the license to act unilaterally in these matters when they affect the transfer of countless numbers of students from other colleges and from secondary schools with A.P. and/or Honors programs, when they potentially affect the English programs at countless other colleges and schools, and when the end result of such changes is academic monopoly, not academic freedom. The articulation process guarantees that when a campus contemplates a drastic change whose effects go far beyond the boundaries of its institution, other segments of higher education and representatives of secondary schools will be consulted at a very early stage in the deliberations. Berkeley has chosen to ignore this fundamental articulation policy.
>
> Because Berkeley refuses to deal with the Liaison Committee, we are informing you of our grave concern and requesting that the Articulation Council take prompt steps to bring all possible pressure on UC Berkeley, in an effort to halt this flagrant abuse of authority before further harm is done to potential transfer students, to English Departments, and to entire academic programs. We see this issue as on demanding immediate action by the Board of Directors of the Articulation Council.
>
> We thank you for your attention to this matter and request that you inform us of any action the Articulation Council takes.
>
> In closing, I feel I should inform you that the Liaison Committee has also directed me to inform the CSU English Council, the UC English Council, and the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges of this current impasse with UC Berkeley. I wish to assure you that we are contacting these Councils only because we feel that as professional organizations representing English instructors throughout the state they have the right and the obligation to assess the position that Berkeley has taken. The three councils will be meeting jointly this April, and we hope that they will include this item on their agendas. Signed: James E. Cagnacci, Chair Liaison Committee on English.

It is my great hope that the Articulation Council, the Office of the Chancellor of California Community Colleges, and the three English Councils will be joined by the Chancellor's Office of the California State University and by every concerned English Department throughout the state in protesting this abusive, unilateral, unrealistic stance of Berkeley. We all have a great stake in maintaining very basic articulation policies and procedures.

JIM CAGNACCI
City College of San Francisco

\$ACRAMENTO \$CENE

Themes and Variations . . .

By GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

This Spring, we need to be especially alert to matters at the State Legislature. Money, as it always is this time of year, is *the* issue, but also, as is often the case, it has been tied to other issues. This year could be a crucial one (more so than the routine crucial years) and bring about a number of changes in the basic nature of the community colleges (CC's) in California. Three primary items require our attention and our action: a proposed review of the Master Plan for Higher Education (an issue of rather recent interest), what has come to be called Matriculation (a new buzz word), and, naturally, the Budget for 1984-85.

The problem, in its general form, is this: Some people (sometimes referred to as "elements") in both the Governor's Office and in the Legislature seem to have less sympathy for the CC's than they might have and certainly less than we think they should have. Assemblyman Richard Katz (D., Sepulveda) said at the Fall meeting of the Academic Senate of the California CC's that the CC's do not have the support groups that the University of California (UC) and the California State University and Colleges (CSUC) have and that many people seem to believe that the CC's collect only those people who cannot make it elsewhere. The Governor, in his proposed budget set forth in January (reported in the March issue of *i.e.*), gave the CC's \$1.507 billion, a subsistence allotment at best. The related issue is that a number of people (and this group probably overlaps somewhat with the one mentioned above) think that if we made a clear case for the CC's—indicated a clear purpose and direction for them, showed that they serve clearly identifiable and deserving people, showed them a picture very different from the one thay have of a loose connection of disparate parts serving a rather raggle-taggle collection of unrelated elements—that their attitudes would change much in our favor. All this brings up the review, or reviews (there are different proposals), of the Master Plan for Higher Education and the attendant issues of matriculation and remediation. However, the urgent issue is the budget because of its deadline of 30 June 1984. Because the Master Plan reviews require time for us to work out the kinks, and all that work cannot be done before 30 June, the budget will be considered first.

. . . But It's Still Money

The budget works out this way: After all the business of fees was finished in January, our allotment for 1983-84 was around \$1.402 billion. The Governor's proposed \$1.507 billion represents an increase of something over 6 per cent to meet the provisions of SB 851 (the basic operating and funding bill of the CC's passed last year). Of the \$1.402 billion, the

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SACRAMENTO SCENE

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State furnished $1.004 billion, property taxes provided $396 million, and federal funds another $4 million (what's a couple of mill. here or there?). Of next year's $1.507 billion, the State will pay $958 million, the projected property taxes will provide $450 million, the federal funds $4 million, and the Governor's people had thought that the new fees would provide $95 million. It is more likely that the fees will produce $75 million instead, and so someone has to find the other $20 million.

Please persist, dear reader, for there is more: The Chancellor's Office of the California CC's is asking the Legislature to give us an additional $116 million. Considering the last two years, we have received no increases for inflation or cost of living allowances (or COLA's as they say). We get the same amount of money in 1983-84 as we got in 1982-83, for example. Measured against the State Government's index of costs and services, we have lost about 12 per cent of our purchasing power (about 25 per cent over the past five years), and the $116 million will recoup this loss.

The Senate's Finance Committee's Sub-committee on higher education has approved the request, and we should thank Walter Stierns, (D., Bakersfield), its chairman, and Nicholas Petris (D., Oakland) and Ken Maddy (R., Fresno), its members, for their action. The members of the Assembly's Sub-committee, Robert Campbell (D., Richmond), Chairman, Richard Katz, Mike Roos (D., Los Angeles), Marian Bergeson (R., Newport Beach), and Patrick Nolan (R., Glendale) deserve our thanks, as well, and our encouragement: they support the request but will not act on it until later in the session. The Governor has not yet indicated what he thinks of it, and we must encourage him in every way we can think of.

The point to emphasize about the budget is that it is only a maintenance budget, that we need to do everything we can to hold the system together until the proposed reviews of the CC's purposes and mission (the several Master Plans for Higher Education) have been completed. Then we can talk about increasing or decreasing the amounts we get. The more urgent of the two is the budget, and we should not divide our attention and energies between the two.

It is too early to tell what form any review of the CC's Master Plan for Higher Education will take. So far only a couple of spot bills have been introduced (bills that reserve a spot on the legislative calendar but contain little or no substance). These bills are currently in various committees and will be filled out, amended, and modified in various ways. They seem, however, to have set up the main thrusts of the proposals. SB 2064 (Stierns) would reassess the CC's mission, study their governance, financing, accountability, and would contract with a private company to do it. SB 1570 (Nielson, R., Woodland) would establish a steering committee to review the whole Master Plan and have the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) do the work. Another proposal would set up a joint legislative oversight committee, an advisory staff, better articulation between the three segments (as they are called) of higher education and the high schools. Yet another (AB 3430, Farr, D., Monterey) would restructure the CC's Board of Governors (BG) to include the Governor, the Speaker of the Assembly, people from K-12, CSUC, and UC; change the terms of the Board members from four to eight years; and require the Senate to approve the appointments. You should keep in touch with your local academic senates to keep track of these proposals so that you can respond to your legislators.

There are two bills regarding matriculation: AB 2638 (Campbell) and SB 1844 (from the CC's Chancellor's Office, no sponsor as yet). They are similar, but still in their infancy. They adopt the definition of matriculation put forth by the Chancellor's Task Force on Academic Quality (CTFAQ). The president of your local academic senate should have some lengthy documents explaining its numerous aspects. In general, it means that students should fill out applications, be tested in reading and mathematics, be properly placed, be counselled and advised (on academic matters, one presumes) and that they must choose some educational goal (to transfer, to earn an associate's degree or a vocational certificate, or to choose an approved individualized program), be remediated if necessary, and make some kind of satisfactory progress.

There is much in the offing, and we have a lot of work to do. We are becoming more of a statewide system; some think that a good thing, others, not so good; but either way, we must work to make our support groups (as the phrase goes) more influential and, perhaps, increase their numbers. Individually, we can support our system by talking and writing to our legislators. But time is getting short. We will have to act quickly to make this a successful legislative year for the CC's.

WRITE . . . WRITE

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ing practiced. We learn writing by doing it. And our students need to write, from elementary school on: poems, stories, letters, study notes, reports, essays, research papers—anything and everything.

But how can we have students do this much writing in overcrowded elementary and secondary classrooms? It's not easy. Before we do anything else, we should fight like hell to reduce class size for English teachers with writing classes (a reduction, according to Savage, that is part of a bill before the Legislature sponsored by State Senator Gary Hart). The difference between twenty-five and thirty-five students in a writing class may be the difference between learning and just passing time. But even in larger classes, while we wait for these reductions in class size, we *can* do more to help students learn to write.

Many English teachers (like most "lay people") have the notion that all writing must be corrected and graded to be useful. They're wrong. The research indicates that there is little correlation between a teacher's comments on a paper and the student's improvement in writing. In fact, experience shows that the reverse may be true: the student who gets back a paper covered with red marks may be permanently turned off to writing.

We need to get students to write more without adding still another burden on the English teacher, and we can do this by recognizing that students learn most from the activity of writing itself, and then later, perhaps, from the activity of sharing that writing with others.

The journal is just one example of this relatively painless way of teaching writing. A student writes regularly (four or five times a week) in a special notebook on any number of topics. It can be a straight academic journal, on one or another school subject, or a more personal journal, where the student records reactions to school and home. The instructor sets up the guidelines for the journal early: the notebook will be checked every few weeks to make sure the students are keeping it. The teacher will only *read* the journal when a student requests it, and even then will only comment on the *substance* of the journal entry and not on its grammar or mechanics. Students who keep journals feel relieved about writing and, over a semester or a year, they build a substantial body of their own work, gain confidence in their writing ability, and learn some of the ways that writing can express their thoughts and feelings. On this positive foundation, teachers can help to build the skills of usage and style. And with this method the teacher will not struggle every week with stacks of papers to correct and grade. Instead, she can use her time to work in conferences with individual students on particular writing tasks she chooses to assign in addition to the journal.

Sharing papers—peer evaluation—is a related idea. Instead of turning finished papers in to the teacher to be be graded, students can read and discuss them in small groups. In fact, the whole writing process, from brainstorming and outlining to final proofreading, can be effectively done in small groups. Students can help each other as the teacher moves from group to group.

What are the advantages of such a workshop method of teaching writing? Writing becomes, not the final paper turned in to some authority, but a means of communication among peers. It becomes the kind of writing that most of us will be doing all our lives: sending messages to friends and fellow workers. Peer evaluation also teaches

us that writing is not just the finished draft, but, rather, that recursive process in which we change our ideas and expression from draft to draft. Working in groups—where readers are asking us, "What are you trying to say here?" or "Is this the best support for your main idea?"—helps us to define our thoughts and clarify our expression, at the same time that it allows us to see writing as a natural process of communication.

But these are not just ideas we need at the elementary or secondary level: many college writing classrooms could benefit from more of this "student-centered" and "writing-centered" instruction. Too many of our community college English classes resemble high school classrooms, and it is impossible to teach any basic writing to often as many as thirty-eight students. We need to fight for smaller classes at all levels, and, in all of our composition classes, we need to encourage our students to write constantly. The techniques discussed above are just two of the many we can use to help our students discover their own writing skills. We need to remember that many of our college writing students are still coming out of high school classrooms where they have not had much experience writing. We can give them that experience—but not by teaching grammar.

In too many English classes, at every level, the teaching of grammar has become a poor substitute for the teaching of writing. Grammar is certainly *easier* to teach: it doesn't take any time at all to run off and correct an objective test on mechanics and punctuation. But the teaching of grammar, unfortunately, has little relation to the acquisition of writing skills. If our students are ever going to learn to write, they need to practice it.

Notices

THE WRITING LAB NEWSPAPER is intended as an informal means of exchanging information among those who work in writing labs and language skills centers. Brief articles (four to six typed pages) describing labs, their instructional methods and materials, goals, programs, budgets, staffing, services, etc. are invited. For those who wish to join the newsletter group, a donation of $5 to help defray duplicating and mailing costs (with checks made payable to Purdue University, but sent to me) would be appreciated. Please send material for the newsletter and requests to join to: Professor Muriel Harris, editor, WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER, Department of English, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907.

21 - 23 June 1984. Young Rhetoricians' Conference. Co-directors Gabriele Lusser Rico (professor of English and Creative Arts and coordinator of compostion) and Hans Guth (professor of English), both of San Jose State University, have planned a conference aimed at rhetoricians who are young in spirit, "teachers up-to-date in their concern with developments in the field, committed to the upgrading of composition as an academic subject . . ." Sessions will include "Teaching with a Purpose," "Left Brain/Right Brain: The Creative Dimension of Composition," "Comp./Comp: Composition and the Computer," "Changing the Self-Image of the Student Writer," and "Parodies Regained: Humor of the Rhetorician." Other sessions are in prepartion.

For more information write Gabriele Lusser Rico, Department of English, San Jose State University, San Jose, CA 95192-0034.

29 July - 3 August 1984. THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL FAULKNER AND YOKNAPATAWPHA CONFERENCE: "Faulkner and Humor." The conference will feature, among others, lectures on "Faulkner's Humor: A European View" (Hans Bungert, University of Regensburg); "Melville and Faulkner: The Comic Vision of Tragic Writers" (Hennig Cohen, Univerity of Pennsylvania); "Humor as Vision of Faulkner" (James M. Cox, Dartmouth); "Faulkner's 'Was' and Uncle Adam's Cow" (Daniel Hoffman, University of Pennsylvania); "Faulkner Reads the Funny Papers" (M. Thomas Inge, Randolph-Macon College).

Additional topics will be explored, and the participants will hear dramatic readings, share a buffet supper at the home of the Howorths (who live across the road from Rowan Oak), and enjoy a picnic on the grounds of Rowan Oak, Faulkner's home. The program will also include small-group discussions, films, slide presentations, and tours. Louis Daniel Brodsky will discuss "Collecting Faulkner" and display items from the collection at the John Davis Williams Library, and the University Press of Mississippi will host an exhibit of Faulkner books submitted by various university presses.

For further information write Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha, Center for the study of Southern Culture, The University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677.

8 - 10 November. COMMUNITY COLLEGE HUMANITIES ASSOCIATION (CCHA)/PACIFIC-WESTERN DIVISION ANNUAL MEETING: "By What is Contrary: The Humanities in 1984." Westin Hotel, San Diego, California. For further information write Polly Zanetta, Olympic College, 16th and Chester, Bremerton, WA 98310.

The CCHA has issued a call for position papers in the following categories: Technology and Computers, Textbooks, Gender and the Humanities, Faculty Renewal, Politics and the Humanities, Entrance Requirements and Remediation, Open Category. For information and applications write Dale Edmonds, Portland Community College, 12000 S.W. 49th Avenue, Portland, OR 97219. The deadline for papers is 30 June 1984.

LETTERS

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poor academic preparation on the next level below.

Hence, university professors blame community college instructors, who blame high school teachers, who blame junior high teachers, who blame . . . ad nauseam. Obviously, this approach leads us nowhere. To lament that students are not academically prepared as we would wish them to be strikes me as not only pointless, but unprofessional as well.

As educators we are paid to use our best knowledge and skills in order to uplift and educate our students as they come to us. If each educator would direct his energies to that task, instead of looking for convenient scapegoats in other institutions or groups, then perhaps a solution to McMartin's problems will be reached.

DONALD J. HALEY
History professor, El Camino College
Torrance

I, too, have been a college professor since 1967. I have taught in the community college system, the California State University system and in graduate school at private universities since that time. I have taught more than 15,000 students - 12,000 of them at the community college level. I can honestly say that some of the most intelligent, motivated, success-oriented students I have ever taught have been at tthe community college. Many of my former students are now close friends and are in such professions as law, medicine, business, television, and other such professions.

I cannot count the number of students who have come back from four-year universities and told me how much they wished the community colleges were four-year institutions because the education they received there was far superior than at the university level.

Another interesting point is that many university professors are upset about salary disparities. Community college professors, by and large, make more money than do university professors. But, I must add, we teach more classes. For example, while I have taught more than 15,000 students since 1967, I would doubt that McMartin has taught more than 5,000 in the same period.

Thus, while McMartin sits in his ivory tower taking cheap shots at community colleges I must get back to more serious endeavors — teaching our very capable and important community college students.

ROGER E. Van HOOK
Long Beach City College

As a product of both the community college system and McMartin's research methods class at Cal State Northridge, and as a community college instructor myself, I feel compelled to respond to his unwarranted attack on the quality of education in community colleges.

While a student at both Pierce and El Camino colleges, I was taught by a succession of competent, conscientious and committed instructors. When I transferred to Cal State Northridge I noted no appreciable increase in the level of difficulty in the material nor in the expectations of the teachers. Every semester I now teach and counsel many students who, like myself, go on to four-year schools and successfully complete their degrees.

Since my experience is at such odds with McMartin's, I have to wonder on what he bases his negative perceptions of community college instruction. I suspect they are based on those transfer students in his own courses who do poorly and who then attempt to avoid responsibility for their performances.

I wonder if he has ever bothered to check if, in fact, those students actually did do "good work" before they transferred to his institution. Further, since university professors are generally unaware of the previous backgrounds of their students unless the students themselves volunteer this information, I imagine that McMartin has many former community college students in his courses who are doing well and of whom he has no knowledge. It seems he has forgotten his own admonition not to draw conclusions from biased samples.

Finally, it should be noted that data collected by the CSU system itself indicate that, on the average, community college transfer students not only hold their own at four-year schools, but in many instances actually surpass the performance of their fellow students who did their first two years of college work at these same institutions.

CAROL WOODWARD
Psychology instructor,
Moorpark College

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